

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Allies and Russia.

At last the Allied Governments have thrown aside all hesitation, and are now definitely at war with the Bolshevik Government. For some time British troops have been going secretly to the Murman coast, but now it is publicly announced that Allied forces, naval and military, landed at Archangel on August 2. This landing, combined with the occupation of Vladivostok by Japanese and other Allied forces, is the beginning of the attack on the Russian Revolutionary Government, for the purpose of "making Russia safe for plutocracy." When the peasants and workmen took over the land and factories without compensation to the proprietors, it was only a matter of time as to when the capitalist Governments of the world would attack Russia to recover their property and thereby preserve their power to exploit the workers of that country. There was only one thing that could prevent this attack on the Revolution, and that was a united protest by the workers in other countries. But although the Russian workers appealed to the workers of the world to support them by similar revolutionary movements, their appeal was only met with paper resolutions of sympathy. Since that appeal was first made, the campaign of lies in the Allied press has led people to look upon the Revolution as meaning murder and robbery. The articles published in *FREEDOM* and a few other papers have shown the people of Russia trying to build up a new society on the ruins of Tsardom, and making many social experiments on Communist lines; but if the Allied Governments have their way and put the Russian landlords and capitalists in power again, all these efforts of the workers will be drowned in blood like the Paris Commune, and King Capital once again be enthroned. The strength of Capitalism in this case is due to the treachery and cowardice of International Socialists, who in many instances are working hand in hand with the oppressors and exploiters of the workers. The letter, "Save the Revolution," which appears in another column, is late in the day, but even now the capitalist wolves could be defeated if the workers understood what the Russian Revolution meant to them.

"To Break Germany beyond Repair."

We have frequently said that this is primarily a commercial war, and that the "destruction of German militarism" was merely a phrase used to hide the real character of the war. At the half-yearly meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, a very important body in the world of capital, Mr. R. B. Stoker, M.P., the president, said: "We must insist upon such terms being imposed upon the enemy that they would not only be annihilated militarily, but be absolutely crippled commercially beyond the hope of resurrection for the next fifty years." This refreshingly frank remark was greeted with loud cheers. It agrees with Mr. Runciman's statement two years ago, that Germany must be beaten commercially so that she can never raise her head again; and also with the demand made by Sir Edward Carson last year: "We must destroy in every country every German business, and get those businesses for ourselves." These gentlemen have not learnt the art of camouflage, or they would have said, like President Wilson, "We are not at war with the German people; but simply wish to deliver them from the autocracy under which they suffer." It means the same thing but is put in a nice wrapper.

Shoot Them!

The recent strike of munition workers when the situation at the Front was so critical has led to a demand for severe punishment, one leader-writer agreeing with Clemenceau that the strikers should be put in the trenches and their leaders shot. In the *Globe* of July 31, the Rev. Prebendary Gough says: "If this strike be settled without punishment, as previous strikes have been, treason will again have vindicated its privileges. . . . The action of those leaders is deeply treasonable. Whether they love the enemy and are counselled or paid by him we need not at

the moment inquire. . . . Their mental attitude towards their country is much the same as Germany's towards the non-German world. . . . Both are out for supremacy. Both are without scruple in their selfishness. And, morally, the kultur of the enemy abroad is of the same brand as the class consciousness of this enemy at home. Both evils must be crushed if civilisation is to be safe and the world made safe for anything but Anarchism." So this reverend gentleman says there must be no more attempts made to conciliate the "essentially Bolshevik groups," who, he admits, have "grown in numbers, reputation, and aggressiveness"; and "rebellion must be punished, and Bolshevism put out of action." This clergyman, like most of his class, would probably like to enforce discipline in munition works by the use of the scaffold, the torture chamber, or by burning at the stake—the methods by which the Church tried to make people believe in a God of Love. He still lives in the Middle Ages, but his ideas are held by many of the ruling class.

Labour Getting Restive.

Although we have never attached much importance to resolutions passed at Labour Conferences, there are many signs that the workers are beginning to realise that if the Governments are left to themselves the war may last many years. The publication of the secret treaties of the Allies and the rejection of all peace overtures have shown that there are plans of conquest on both sides of the Rhine, and that all those oratorical flourishes about reinstating "brave little Belgium" and "brave little Serbia" are simply the camouflage by which the politicians hide their real motives. The French Trade Union Congress held last month passed a resolution in favour of a general strike to compel the issue of passports for an international Socialist Conference, when decided on; and in a resolution on terms of peace they opposed an economic war after the war, and also annexations on either side. As this was the first Congress the French had held during the war, this resolution is very significant. The recent strike in munition factories in this country also revealed a tendency in the direction of bringing the war to an end without waiting for the politicians. At Coventry, we are told by the *Standard*, the speeches and the posters showed this growing spirit of the workers. "Strike to stop the war," "The more munitions you make the longer the war lasts," and "It is our duty to hold up munitions to bring Lloyd George to his knees and compel him to make a decent peace." If the French and English workers had the courage to translate their words into deeds, the present war would soon come to an end, and they would then be free to fight the only war worth fighting against authority and exploitation.

Raising the School Age.

When the new Education Bill was introduced in the House of Commons, the Bolton spinners, by a majority of 500 in a poll of 4,000, decided against the proposal for the abolition of half-time and raising the age for full-time employment to 14 years. It is strange how bitterly freedom for children is opposed by some parents and employers. They both think them fit subjects for exploitation. In a book called "A Corner of the Cotswolds," the author states that in 1832 the Child Labour Bill then before Parliament proposed that no child should work in the woollen and cotton trades until nine years of age, under thirteen years hours were limited to nine a day, under eighteen years to twelve hours, and night-work was prohibited. The Cotswold weavers opposed these provisions. If the hours of children's labour are to be curtailed, they say, "young people would be on the streets a prey to vice and idleness." "Is the child," they ask, "to be kept at school till nine years of age, and, if so, who is to pay for it?" "Parents," they continue, "have lately had their common fund reduced by the subtraction of their children's labour, which Providence had before kindly given them almost as the equivalent for the great care and burden of a large family." Probably that is the point of view of the Bolton spinners of to-day. Very few people are in favour of allowing children free development; they generally argue in favour of making them efficient wage-slaves.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

It is estimated that about 85 per cent. of the Russian people are engaged in work on the land, either agricultural or forest working trades, so that the land question is the one that is of overwhelming importance there. We have seen in these Notes the courageous way in which this question is being settled by the people themselves. There are also near Petrograd, Moscow, and in other districts some quite up-to-date and well-equipped factories, and big metal-working establishments, where human labour was exploited on the most approved capitalist methods. This side of the social question is also being dealt with in the same satisfactory manner.

Immediately after the March (1917) Revolution the workmen in industrial establishments elected various committees. In most cases there were four: a works committee, a shop committee, a wages committee, and an arbitration committee. These committees were elected by the whole of the workers at the establishment, no distinction being made for age, sex, position, or length of time they had worked there. The works committee undertook the general control of the establishment, often elected the directors. Its members were frequently occupied the whole day (8 hours) with their various duties. The shop committee replaced foremen and overseers, except in technical matters. The wages committee dealt with the different classes of salaries. The arbitration committee, composed entirely of workmen, decided all disputes, including those between owners and workers.

The first Revolution overthrew all coercive authority; police, lawyers and judges vanished; the soldiers were on the side of the workmen; there was no real power moral or physical outside their Soviets. They were absolute masters of the situation, and remain so. But at first the economic position was not clearly understood by them, and they confined themselves to comparatively small reforms. They increased wages about three-fold, in some cases, as in that of the metal workers at Petrograd, about four-fold; reduced hours of work, generally to 8 hours; and replaced the bullying and slave-driving common to capitalism by an intelligent and friendly organisation of work. In many cases they succeeded by these means in considerably increasing the total output.

But in revolutionary times ideas always spread widely and develop with extreme rapidity. By November, when the Coalition bourgeois and Socialist political Government of Kerensky was bloodlessly overthrown by the Bolsheviks, the time had arrived for replacing the democratic State, which lawyer politicians admire so much, by a federal organisation of workmen's councils, the Soviets, to administer industrial and communal affairs. These Soviets at once passed a Decree placing all industrial establishments that employed labour, whether capitalist or co-operative, under the complete control of workmen's committees, in conjunction with the local Soviets and a Central Economic Council, formed by delegates from Trade Unions in proportion to their membership, from Workmen's Co-operative Societies, and from Peasant Councils. These committees control all the business of an establishment, including financial matters, the fixing of minimum wages, and of the price at which the goods shall be sold. This Decree applies to all industrial, commercial, and agricultural undertakings, including banking, transport, etc. As in the case of the land, the carrying out of these regulations is left to local bodies. The result seems to be that a great variety of interesting experiments are being carried out in different parts of the country.

The octopus of International Finance was strangled by nationalisation of the banks and the repudiation of foreign and other State loans, a policy which most of the Russian revolutionary parties had announced years ago that they would adopt. They made it clear at that time that if foreign financiers and investors were anxious to supply Tzardom with money, to enable it to hold on a little longer, and to crush out all revolutionary movements against it, the victims of this policy had no intention of willingly submitting to be robbed to repay them.

At the present time in Russia the supply of agricultural machinery is a matter of great urgency and importance. Speculation and profiteering in this has been prevented by making its supply a Soviet monopoly, and the central executive are exerting themselves to secure an adequate supply of the different kinds needed. Some peasant co-operative societies are establishing huge works for its manufacture. At Jaroslav, for instance, a combination of Co-operative Unions from several surrounding provinces, is erecting a factory for making agricultural machinery that will be the largest in Russia. Its cost, seven million roubles, is being met by the societies concerned, and by a levy of three roubles per head on all their members. The labour required is to be supplied from the membership of the Co-operative Societies,

who are afterwards to return to their respective villages and instruct the population in the use of the machinery.

On June 4 a Decree was issued nationalising foreign trade. Exports and imports are organised by a Council for Foreign Trade, composed of delegates from Trade Union organisations, co-operative unions, central Soviet organisations, the Supreme Economic Council, and from various central councils and departments dealing with economic and administrative affairs, including the army, navy, foreign affairs, finance, transport, food, agriculture, textiles, etc. This committee purchases supplies abroad, either directly or through Co-operative Societies, etc., and in the same way arranges for the export of Russian goods, and settles the prices of all goods imported or exported. For the supply of some things co-operative organisations have been given the sole right of purchasing abroad what is required. At home, not only Siberian butter, but practically the whole of the flax and timber trades are now concentrated in the hands of Co-operative Societies.

On April 11 a Decree was issued on Consumers' Co-operative Societies. This had previously been unanimously agreed to at a Conference between the delegates of various central co-operative organisations and representatives of the Supreme Economic Council. It provides for the complete working together of Soviets and distributive co-operative societies in "the purchase, supply, and manufacture of commodities." It is a compromise between the two sets of ideas, and seems designed to bring about the eventual union of Soviet and co-operative undertakings. In the meantime it secures the right of every person to join Co-operative Societies on the payment of a nominal entrance fee, not to exceed 50 kopecks (1s.), all further share contributions to be deducted from their dividends, which appear to be limited to 5 per cent. on their purchases. Special facilities are given to societies which succeed in enrolling as members the entire population of their districts. Each district is served by one Co-operative Society and its branches. Overlapping is not permitted. When societies obtain adequate supplies of all kinds they must pay "the wages of the working classes by means of certificates entitling them to receive definite commodities from the Society's stores." These Societies are prohibited from having private traders on their management committees. Representatives of Co-operative Societies are included on the Soviet food committees, "which control private trading concerns, and are empowered to take them over on behalf of the Soviets." Co-operative Societies are subject to all regulations made by the Soviets for the distribution of goods, especially food.

In view of the decreased value of money some co-operative organisations, like the union of West Siberian Co-operative Societies, are organising the delivery to the Stores by their members, of various raw materials, and their exchange for their own manufactures, or various other goods they can supply. The union has a soap factory, boot works, engineering shop for repairs to agricultural machinery, etc., and is starting leather works.

By a Decree on Inheritance, all property passes at death to the Soviets, subject to payments to dependents who require it. This is to continue until the Law of Social Security, that will provide for every individual the necessities of life, is in full working order.

The extent to which Bolshevik ideas of social and political organisation are being supported by the Russian people may be judged from the results of recent Soviet elections in Petrograd and Moscow. Moscow—Bolshevik and allied parties, 395 seats; non-Bolshevik Socialist parties, 82 seats. Petrograd—Bolsheviks and allied parties, 252 seats; non-Bolshevik Socialists, 6 seats. An anti-Bolshevik resolution on the war and foreign intervention, passed by a section composed of various delegates to the projected Constituent Assembly that fortunately never met, was considered by a combined meeting of the Petrograd Soviet, Petrograd Shop Stewards' Committee, Central Council of Trade Unions, and all the delegates of the Red Army. More than one thousand delegates were present, and they condemned this resolution (which was trotted out by Kerensky at Paris) by all votes except thirty-four.

All this immense work of replacing the hideous system of capitalist exploitation by a real Co-operative Commonwealth is going on not in a single town, or small district, but in one of the largest countries in the world, wonderfully rich in natural resources, where is to be found a remarkable variety of races and civilizations, and which is the meeting point of East and West; a people apparently destined in any case to play a tremendously important rôle amongst the nations of the world in the near future, and as a successful Socialist community ideally situated for spreading

"Freedom and comradeship from East to West," and establishing, by the force of example, the new type of social

organisation amongst the two great sections of the human race, the European and Asiatic.

Enemies of the Social Revolution, although very keen and unscrupulous, in Russia itself are evidently few in number and weak in influence; but foreign enemies are numerous and strong, and equally unscrupulous, stopping at no lies or underhand means to defeat it, the more so as they begin to fear it is going to spread around the world, and make an end in our time, and soon, of perhaps the vilest and most hypocritical system of economic exploitation that has cursed human society.

It would be an abominable crime to allow the least hindrance to be put in the way of our Russian comrades who are working out their great destiny. Of course, every sincere Revolutionary Socialist wants to help in every possible way, and to see that his native land shall be the next place on the list, that will soon grow a long one, where Social Revolution shall be equally triumphant.

F.C.C.

IRELAND AND LABOUR.

(Conclusion.)

Since the 1916 rebellion Ireland has been governed by a type of martial law. I say "a type," for the conditions in various counties differ, being stringent in some and almost forgotten in others. The chief reminders that it still prevails are the periodical parading of the streets by small pickets of fully-armed soldiers (this in itself is intimidating), and the constant arrests of Sinn Féiners all over the country for illegal drilling, as well as the proclaiming of one county after another as military areas, and enforcing the passport system for intercommunications.

There is something admirable about the calm way the people endure interferences, and in the enthusiastic Republicans continuing unperturbed the very activities the authorities endeavour to crush. It is generally believed that the recent dramatic arrests of prominent Sinn Féin leaders were engineered by the Government to precipitate matters, and give them a pretext for the imposition of greater tyrannies upon Ireland's rebellious youth, and that the farcical "plot" was but a blind to cover their ridiculous action. Governments act thus; their own standard is conspiratory; the essence of their methods to enforce allegiance is coercion; so they are unconscious of the fact that such methods encourage the growth of the very elements they would crush. Intrigues are faked to throw dust into the eyes of sentimental supporters of the State. Governments plot and fight to protect vested interests and privileges.

It is but in harmony with the complexity of Irish conditions that a well organised espionage system should flourish there. Spies, those degraded, despicable, parasite-hirelings of the Servile State, are numerous in Erin. Apart from the ordinary city police force, supplemented in country districts by those brutal, mentally deficient gendarmerie, the Royal Irish Constabulary, and apart from the ordinary detectives, there are what are known as "G" or Government men,—tall, overfed, imported English spies; there are also women police attached to the ordinary city protectors of private property, as well as to the military, with their adventitious corps of "red caps," etc. This is saying nothing of the individuals, who, despite strong preventative measures adopted by the republican organisations, gain admittance to such to carry out their duty.

Thus is Law and Order effectively maintained! And yet, in spite of all, the Pót of Discontent bubbles peacefully and surely. One only laments that what fine spirit we do find active should be (from the workers' standpoint) wasted on so puerile a movement as Nationalism, so servile a cause as Religion. One hopes that the growth of Capitalism in Ireland will see the wane of Catholic influence over the people's minds, and of Religion's power over the people's lives, and enforce greater attention toward the vital problems of earthly existence. Nationalism will die, maybe, when the influence of a purely Irish Government has been felt, and the workers gain consciousness of the abuses common to all Governments.

Recently the *Herald* published an article by H. Nevinson, on "Dublin." Readers of that journal who have not actually lived and worked in the city might have gained an erroneous impression of Dublin's condition. Nevinson idealises the beauties he saw there (on a flying visit, one might hazard), and on the intellectual atmosphere of the place; but little he mentions respecting its vile industrial conditions, which repel so much as to almost blind one to the fact that, amidst the terrible squalor and ugliness, a few beautiful buildings are to be seen in striking contrast, and one almost forgets that Dublin's environs are also, in the main, pleasant and attractive. I was born in a slum district of Manchester, I have visited such hells of miserable

poverty in various cities, but never so bad have they been as in poor degraded Dublin. There are thousands there who are continually unemployed,—thousands on the verge of starvation, who are only kept alive by the doles of the numerous charitable organisations, and the conditions in the numerous tenement houses are too awful to be properly described. The nightly return of women and children of good character, seeking aid at but one Night Refuge (Brickfield Lane, Dublin), averages from 490 to 500. This is saying nothing of the pitiable plight of those whom Authority rejects on account of their possessing no "good character," nor of the numerous male outcasts who tramp the streets at night, and congregate in idle groups at street corners during day time.

In the country places it is notable that the status of the peasantry is, generally considered, lower than that of the English peasantry, and conditions in the towns are comparable in the same degree. The cause is, of course, sociological, and needs a revolutionary change of economic conditions, as well as a more libertarian outlook among the people, to alter matters. It is worth mentioning that more than twice as much is expended on law courts, police, and gaols in Ireland as on education; and here that country is on a parallel with one other nationality oppressed by English tyranny: India.

I would give a brief criticism, before concluding, of the parties in Ireland with pretensions to a Socialistic outlook upon Society. In Belfast there exists what is known as the Catholic Socialist Society, a religious reform body—akin to the Church Socialist League in England. The members are uneasy over present day material conditions, and at the same time are fearful of interfering with the arrangements of God in any drastic manner; so they believe they can conciliate with a potentially progressive ideal such as that of Socialism, which has a definitely materialistic basis, by affecting a compromise between that and their ordinary religious beliefs.

In Belfast, too, there exists a branch of the Independent Labour Party. In Ireland this body has very little influence, possibly because the Irish consider it an English incursion, and therefore taboo! As a purely pacifist organisation, urging ameliorations by constitutional means, it is natural that it should not appeal to the average Irishman, to whose temperament pacifism seems foreign. The Irish are hero-worshippers, and do not remember the Jim Connollys as worthy comrades fighting to free the world's exploited class, but as martyrs and saints, whose memory is worshipful and reverential. Long ages of persecution have made Irishmen rebels, but Religion has kept them servile and weakly emotional, and they are easily swayed.

The only party which boasts of its being the Socialist party—following the arrogance of its English cousins, the S.P.G.B. and the S.L.P.—spoils itself by the methods of its propagandist diplomatists. I refer to the Socialist Party of Ireland, chiefly known in and around Dublin. When questioned as to the relationship of Socialism with Sinn Féin and Roman Catholicism, for instance, querists are informed that Socialism has nothing whatever to do with our religious opinions, which are a personally private matter, and also that it is not antagonistic to Sinn Féin, for many Socialists are Sinn Féiners too! And such is the camouflage doled out to dope the gullible, to allay their fears that the Red Star will not by any chance singe the hem of Religion's cloak, or interfere with a selfishly narrow Nationalism; and the S.P.I. contend, when tackled, that they are enthusiastically "making Socialists"! And what a type too! The average Irish Socialist I have questioned on the matter admits he is an Irishman first and a Socialist after—(just like our friends of the English National Socialist Party, now masquerading under the cognomen of The British Workers' League, forsooth!)—but only while Ireland remains a subject nation, some hasten to add.

The question of Labour's progress in Ireland is very complex, and conditions are such as to daunt the spirit of all but the truly enthusiastic. Nationalism will triumph, no doubt, and the workers there will see at last that the idol was not as they had idealised, and is unworthy of their further allegiance. In the meanwhile, the revolutionary propagandist, rather than allow the spread of the Nationalist idea to grow uncriticised, must bring the whole force of his intellectual armoury to bear upon it, and upon religion. We must fight straight, preaching our philosophy simply, forcefully, attacking each stronghold of priestly privilege and landlord tyranny, carefully undermining superstition, ignorance, and apathy. The workers of Ireland must learn to realise that the essence of Liberty is in Equality, and that they can only gain either by identifying themselves with all workers the world over, as workers and not as Nationalists. Given economic class-consciousness, given a clear vision of the materially possible, in place of a servile emotionalism dominated by fear of the supernatural, Ireland shall yet find unity with the world's working class.

C. B. WARWICK.

Freedom

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THE SUPREME TEST.

Now that we have entered upon the most critical phase of the war from a revolutionary standpoint, we would like to make an appeal to that great body of Socialists and the mere handful of Anarchists who have been supporting the war. To begin with, for the sake of argument we will admit that, though some of them may have been influenced by financial considerations, the bulk of them honestly believed that it was a necessary evil forced on them by circumstances. Of course, our remarks will apply to all Revolutionists both in Allied and in "enemy" countries, but at present we will deal mainly with those in the ranks of the Allies.

When the war broke out and you took sides with the Russian, French, and British Governments, many of your old comrades were surprised and disgusted with your conduct; so you thought it necessary to give reasons for your action. To summarise them briefly, they were as follows: As Socialists and Revolutionists, you had watched events in Germany, and had found that the great stumbling-block to a vast revolutionary change was the highly organised German Government, which was backed by the powerful German Army. However many votes German Social Democrats could command, they were powerless in the face of that army. The Russian autocracy was equally reactionary, but it was beginning to crumble and would soon be destroyed from within were it not for the support it received from the German Government. Therefore, if the German autocracy was defeated the Russian autocracy would also fall. The French Government might be reactionary, but France was the land of the Great Revolution, and must be protected if a Social Revolution was to be successful. Britain also had Ireland and India to her discredit, but after all, her rule in those two countries was not so bad as the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire with its many subject nationalities. Therefore, while admitting these evils in the Allied countries, you saw worse in the enemy countries, and of two evils you chose the lesser. As for adopting a revolutionary attitude and declaring a general strike against the war, it would only play into the hands of the enemy. In any case, you were safeguarding the liberties and free institutions of your own countries, and your Governments had issued statements that they were fighting only to safeguard the rights of small nationalities and to enforce respect for treaties. You were assured it was not a capitalists' war or a war of conquest.

Now that four years have passed, and you have had time to sum up the results of the war to date, are you so sure that your first thoughts were correct? Are you so certain that it is not a capitalists' war, or that your Governments are any more scrupulous in their dealings with small nationalities (or weak nationalities) than are the enemy Governments? When the German Chancellor said that military necessity was their excuse for going through Belgium, you thought it was the remark of a bully (as it undoubtedly was). But when the Japanese seized the Shantung Peninsula (Chinese territory) to attack the Germans in Kiao-chow, you ignored the protests of the Chinese against this invasion. When the Russians invaded Persia to attack the Turks, you took no notice of it. When the Allies seized the Greek fleet, stopped Greek foodships, dissolved the Greek Parliament, and dethroned the King of Greece, you accepted all the glib excuses and lies you were told in justification. And finally, when the Allies seized the whole of the mercantile fleet of Holland, in spite of the vehement protests of the Dutch Government and people, your silence sanctioned this outrage. But what of the rights of small nationalities? And wherein do these acts differ from those of the Germans in Belgium? Simply in the fact that the nations

affected—Chinese, Persian, Greek, and Dutch—seeing what had happened to Belgium when she resisted, thought it better to let the Allies have their way in case worse befel them. "Military necessity" triumphed without bloodshed, and parts of China and Greece are still occupied by the forces of the Allies. As to the Secret Treaties, you have read them by now and know all the Allies' plans of conquest set forth in them.

And when we come nearer home, have you found the actions of your Governments agree with their sonorous and unctuous phrases about liberty and justice? Do you remember the trickery employed in passing the Registration Act and the Military Service Acts? Do you remember the lies and the broken promises to various Trade Union deputations? The politicians who used those methods to compel their fellow countrymen to take up arms do not know the meaning of the words "liberty and justice." But you still continued your support, and still hoped that better things would come later. The politicians, however, knew that they could do almost anything they pleased, because if you broke away from them it would be a proof that you had been fooled from the beginning, and you had not yet reached the point where you would admit that. As lovers of free speech and free press you saw your Governments throw men and women into prison, raid their printing offices, suppress their papers, and seize and destroy their literature, because they dared to say and print words which might have stopped the wholesale carnage. You still remained silent.

Then came the case of Ireland. What was the cause of the Easter Rebellion in Dublin in 1916? It was an attempt on the part of the rebels to throw off the English yoke of seven centuries and to put into action the principle of "self-determination of small nationalities," which the Allied statesmen have vowed is one of the main objects of the war. And how did those statesmen act? Did they agree to grant the claim of the Irish? No; they drowned the rebellion in blood, and shot the leaders who had surrendered under a flag of truce—a thing they have never dared to do to the Germans. Still you remained silent! Still you were too ashamed to say you had made a mistake!

But now has come the final test. There is not a Socialist or Anarchist who has not denounced the autocracy in Russia and all its evil works. You looked forward to the day when it would all be swept away, and the people of Russia be free to work out their own salvation in their own way. And when the Revolution burst on an astonished world in March last year, you welcomed it as a stepping stone to a world-wide Social Revolution. In the fifteen months which have elapsed since then you have discovered that, in spite of their tremendous difficulties, the workers and peasants of Russia are making good use of their newborn freedom, and are working at the building of a new society free of politicians, judges, lawyers, and police. Landlords have been abolished, and capitalists are but figure-heads in their factories and businesses. When knowledge of these happenings get better known, the workers of the world will wish to follow the example. But the capitalists of the world realise their danger. This example of freedom must be isolated like a fever-stricken area—it is a dangerous and contagious disease in the eyes of capitalists. And now all the machinery is ready to wipe it out. Lies—mountains of lies—have been told you to make you agree to this villainy, but the plain outstanding fact is that the Allied troops are going into Russia to smash the Revolution and to restore the land to the landlords and the factories to the capitalists, and to compel the people to repay the money the Tsar borrowed to keep them in subjection. The freedom the workers and peasants have gained is to be but a dream to them, and all who resist will be slaughtered, like the French Government slaughtered the Communards in Paris in 1871. All the fine phrases in the Press about "helping Russia" and "supporting the Czecho-Slovaks" are humbug, and you who have been supporting the Governments and the war for four years know that the crushing of the Revolution is the real and only motive of the Allied invasion of Russia. You may not agree with all the Bolsheviks have done—neither do we; but if you have the smallest drop of revolutionary blood in your veins, you must raise your voice in protest against this infamous plot of International Capital, and so break the chains that have bound you to your Governments for the past four years. And now that at last you have realised your terrible mistake, lose no time in awakening your fellows as to the consequences to the workers in every country if this threatened blow at the Russian people is not stopped. If the chains are placed on the Russian workers again, there will be little hope of the workers of other countries breaking their chains for many a long day.

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THAT WAR DEBT BOGEY.

Now that official Labour has so obligingly sold itself to our capitalist Government and saved the Empire from the wily and bloodthirsty Hun, the gentlemen who represent the Government are again walking with their accustomed insolent swagger whilst they concoct fresh plots for the continued enslavement of the workers. So we have that friend of liberty, Sir Edward Carson, giving fatherly advice to a conference of manufacturers. He insisted, of course, that we could not get on without capital, that we were living in a state of artificial prosperity, and had been led into new standards of living which were not normal standards, and finally, that our enormous taxation must necessarily lead to increased cost and a greater burden on the consumer. He took a gloomy view of the future, deprecating paying off the national debt by a levy on capital. In addition to that debt he foresaw that we would suffer from dislocated businesses, increased cost of production, a universal shortage of raw material, and on the top of all that, a great deal of unemployment. After all this tale of woe Sir Edward called up the spirit of the Paris Conference and dangled the spectre of Tariff Reform before his audience. So much for the insight and originality of the famous champion of downtrodden Ulster.

But the uneasiness and gloominess of spirit is not confined to this illustrious knight. Many other speakers and writers of less renown have spent much superfluous energy on explaining the need for a war after the war, or of devising some quack method of paying our enormous war bills. In spite, however, of the specious schemes launched upon an over-credulous people, two facts stand out with quite startling clearness. First, that our modest war debt is not less than 7,000 millions, and that only if the war ends now. Secondly, that both capital and interest will ultimately be paid by the "free" wage-slaves of the British Empire. It is no wonder, therefore, that fresh schemes to get wealth quickly should continually be devised by the hirelings of the State. According to a recent article in the *Nation*, entitled "A Plan to Wipe Out War Debt," our total debt represents some 40 per cent. of our aggregate wealth. The writer takes a gloomy view of the situation, for he says:

"An honest solution for Austria, Germany, or even Italy or France, seems impossible, for no statesman dare face the obloquy involved in such huge taxation as would be required to meet the bill. Countries which have financed their war almost entirely by borrowing and printing money will not be likely to exhibit the courage necessary to abandon these practices. Even in this country, unless our statesmen are compelled by public opinion to wipe out a large part of the debt by a capital levy, the temptation to keep on borrowing during a period of resettlement may prove irresistible. Everywhere, indeed, the financial situation will seem to carry the alternatives of ruinous taxation or repudiation. Now, as we may rule out repudiation for the Western world, the whole pressure will come upon devising some way of softening the rigors of taxation."

Hence Sir Edward Carson and his familiar pre-war parrot cry of "Tariff Reform." He is only concerned with ensuring to the members of the class to which he belongs the usual share of the loot legally "lifted" from the wage-earning class. Thus he deprecates a levy on capital and pins his faith to a tariff that will enhance the price of all necessary commodities—in other words, the wholesale impoverishment of the workers. But whichever way we turn, the same ghastly spectre of poverty haunts us so long as we continue to support a machine which exists for the purpose of exploiting 95 per cent. of the people for the benefit of the remaining five per cent.

Let us look at another brilliant suggestion from the pen of one signing himself "A. G." and appearing in the *Evening Standard* for July 30. The writer commences with the assumption that a higher standard of living has resulted to the workers as a result of the war. But whether that will remain, he declares, will depend upon the workers themselves.

"If they aim at rivalling the high rates of wages paid in America they will have to conform to the American worker's conception of the function of production; in other words, there must be no restriction of individual output. . . . Besides, the needs of the country for many years will imperatively demand the fullest exercise of human energy in all channels of production. There will be a tremendous lot of leeway to be made good. The wastage of four years of war will take many years thoroughly to repair, and will necessitate extraordinary efforts to complete the work. Restriction of output in such circumstances would be suicidal. We may take it that the workers will not be blind to this obvious fact. On

the other hand, the employers must Americanise their standpoint. . . . The British manufacturer must produce to the limits of his capacity. This, however, is not possible unless his workers are prepared to put the last ounce of their energy into their work. So that we get back to the proposition that a higher standard of living, in the time to come, will depend upon the workers themselves. . . . The problem of the reconstruction of industry will not be solved in the United Kingdom until our employers and workers make up their mind to Americanise our industrial methods."

So now the brutal murder is out. In order to pay off the huge war loans, industry is to be remodelled along scientific lines which will reduce the process of exploitation to a fine art. We are all far too familiar with the growth of industry in America to desire its transplantation in this country. This pseudo-paradise has proved to be a veritable workers' hell with its infernal methods of speeding-up, co-partnership, and other dodges invented to destroy the solidarity of Labour. Then over all looms the sinister figures of the Pinkerton gang. If these things stand for progress, for prosperity, for a higher standard of living, then we are infinitely better off without them. The one great point overlooked by most of the brilliant writers on economics and industrial matters to-day is that life, even to the worker, should stand for happiness, for expansion, for self-expression; and they fail to see that the mere production of a human machine that must inevitably become worn out and scrapped at forty is not quite the ideal of life that even a poor, protoplasmic piece of humanity known as a wage-slave in his most degraded moments might desire.

So in answer to the knightly champion of liberty, Sir Edward Carson, and to all the legion of authoritarian writers who are intent upon arranging the worker's affairs so nicely for him, we would reply that there is only one way of liberating industry and the man behind the machine, and of incidentally paying off our huge war debts, and that is by reorganising society upon the basis of the right of every human unit to a free and happy life, and by abolishing the rights of property and the suppression of all parasitism. Work, but not over-work, to be assured to all. Thus simply and automatically would the momentous question of the payment of war debts be decided. With the disappearance of capitalism, that bogey of 7,000 millions of war debt would vanish into thin air.

M.B.H.

SAVE THE REVOLUTION.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

Sir,—We desire to bring to the notice of all sections of the Socialist and Labour Movement whose sympathies lie with the Bolshevik regime in Russia in its endeavour to safeguard the Revolution, the extremely grave and urgent situation which confronts our Russian comrades.

In the Ukraina and in Finland, where the counter-revolutionary governments received the recognition of the French authorities, the Socialist Movement among the workers has since been deliberately crushed with the aid of the German Army. The leader of the Cadets, Miliukoff, is stated in the Press to have proceeded to Berlin. The Czecho-Slovaks have expressed their intention of "abolishing the nationalisation and socialisation of commercial and industrial organisations" and so restoring "the right of ownership of private property."

It is quite evident from all the news that is coming through official sources that the counter-revolutionaries, whether capitalists or moderate Socialists, are utterly unreliable in their attitude towards the Allies, and that their main aim is to defend Property and to re-establish some form of rule which does not reflect the ideas or express the will of the working-class. Any student of modern military strategy can see that the idea of re-establishing the Russian Front through Finland and by means of a single line of railway, is absurd, and a mere pretence to cover the real objective of restoring "order" in Petrograd and Moscow which, the counter-revolutionaries know, they cannot hope to do without the assistance of foreign bayonets.

This threatened interference in Russia at the "request" of certain Russians (the Murman Regional Council, representing a very small population, is repudiated by the Bolshevik Government as counter-revolutionary) is the first open measure in the Inter-Capitalist Counter-Revolution. It is a declaration of war by the American, British and French capitalists upon the Bolsheviks for having dared to repudiate the loans made by them to Tzardom which enabled it to crush the Revolutionary Movement from 1905 onwards. It is this, but it is more. It is a declaration of war on them as the banner-bearers of the International Social Revolution. The guns of the "deliverers" will volley forth the

message of the Bondholders of Democracy to the whole international proletariat of debtor people.

A state of war with the Bolsheviks will enable the capitalists of all countries to attack, intern and harry all whom Northcliffe and his coterie care to consider as Bolsheviks. That means all sections of the Socialist Movement not in alliance with the authorities and regardless of whether or not they are avowedly sympathetic in that direction. This is being done and will continue to be done in the cause of "making the world safe for Democracy."

In this connection it should be remembered that there are two forms of Democracy with two underlying philosophies fundamentally and irrevocably antagonistic to each other.

The first is that of the Right of Man to Property, the second is of all sections of the people. The former, which is the keystone of the American and French Republican Democracies is alien from the whole conception of Socialism, and makes of the protagonists of these ideas irreconcilable adversaries. This explains the attitude of the Allied Governments to the Bolsheviks and makes it plain what fate awaits our comrades unless we utilise every agency of expression, every opportunity of informing the executives of the bondholders that the working class of this country will tolerate no action bringing in its train a repetition of the massacres accompanying the suppression of the Paris Commune and of the Russian Revolution of 1905. We direct your gaze to the "Wall of Memories" of 1871, and the thousand gallows of Stolypin. We beg you to realise that, as in 1848, the moderates of the Kerensky type will be swept aside like flies on a window pane, as events force these idealists to participate in measures of repression of which they do not dream. Comrades, this is the gravest hour in the history of the Socialist International! It is up to us to save the Russian Socialists and thereby to save ourselves! To work!—Yours fraternally,

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST, C. T. PENDREY, J. REYNOLDS.
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G. W. BROWN, A. E. CHANDLER, —. McLAINE,
CHARLES WATKINS, EBBY EDWARDS,

CHILDREN IN FETTERS.

Before the Bill which recently dragged its weary way through the Commons was drafted, it was considered necessary that some public interest—or interests—on the subject of Education should be aroused. Accordingly a number of people—experts presumably—proceeded on tour to lecture the members of such organisations as were willing to listen to them. Arriving at a Trades Council meeting, they would proceed to show how, for the lack of education, the children of working people were unable to enjoy life in all its fulness, and that ignorance was the very thing which prevented the workers from asserting and getting their rights. At a chamber of commerce meeting, however, these same people had another tale to tell. There, they told of the economic war that must inevitably follow the present war; and how British employers of labour could not hope to compete successfully in the markets of the world with German employers, unless there should be available large supplies of trained and efficient labour power. In short, the workers were told that education would bring them freedom; the employers were told that education would supply them with well trained and disciplined wage-slaves.

This present war, we are told in strident tones, is being waged to secure the freedom of the world. We look carefully at those who thus bellow at us and find they are the people who would imprison anyone whose beliefs do not agree with theirs. And in their hands lies the power of dictating what shall, and what shall not be taught in the State schools. It follows in due sequence, that the educational machine will grind out exactly the kind of boy and girl life they may require for their commercial undertakings, their industrial concerns, their household requirements. It is not yet possible to gather grapes from thistles. Let the records of such people be overhauled!

By most people, I believe, education is regarded as being the alternative to factory life. Because a child must go to school, he cannot go to the factory. Said a poor woman to me the other day, "If the government is going to keep children at school until they are sixteen, I consider it very hard lines on we parents. I have brought up a family of seven, and just when they are likely to be of use to us (i.e., to earn money by working), then we have to keep them at school, because the government says we must." Two alternatives, from our point of view, are before such people as this woman represents: they must either stand up and demand their right, or they must grovel on their knees for State maintenance. As to which is the more dignified there can be no two opinions. Twenty years ago this poor soul might have repeated

to me a verse, still to be found in some hymnals,—perhaps she does repeat it to herself now—

"The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly,
And ordered their estate,"

but having no occasion for any such God, I should not have been impressed by the argument.

Not so many years ago, the young children of working folk were sent into the mines and factories of the country, there to work for ten and twelve and fourteen hours a day. On their broken bodies were erected huge mansions decked out with upholstery and costly fripperies. It is small consolation to us to know that churches and libraries and schools were erected thereon also. The same condition of things obtains to-day—the children are a little older, that is all. One might have thought that in sheer desperation working folk would have turned on their exploiters, long before this, and have trampled them under foot; instead they have been given factory acts and education acts. Stones for bread!

The entire cost of our educational system is borne by those who are the producers of wealth. There need be no mistake about this. And the working folk pay a little more for their tea, their sugar, their coffee, that their children may be made into more efficient wage-slaves. When its schooldays are over, the child—a marvellous little tool composed of flesh and bones and blood—is employed by an employer, he paying to its parents a percentage of the cost of the child's maintenance, which means in fact, that the parents by keeping this human tool in good order, are subsidising, in some degree, its employer. And to right this initial wrong the people of the country are persuaded that education acts must be heaped upon education acts; that the code must be subjected to change after change; that anything and everything must be done, except that simple business of getting rid of those who exploit them and live on them.

The people's schools are not yet built! There is no general understanding of what education is! We are deceived and deluded by those who would have us go their way and not our own! But signs are not wanting to show that already the pioneers are making new paths into the forest of ignorance and superstition. If such work be not to our hands, we can at least give these brave spirits a cheer and the hand of fellowship.

JOHN WAKEMAN.

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