

Freedom

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NOTES.

The 'Lusitania' and Cant.

The sinking of the 'Lusitania' on May 22 by a German submarine is one of the most tragic happenings in the record of barbarities which will make the sum total of this war. It is easy enough to take one's thoughts upon such a wholesale and ruthless destruction of life from one's daily paper, and simply shelve the responsibility upon the German Emperor and his satellites. Indeed, our immediate feelings, influenced by the knowledge of the loss of at least one good friend of the Anarchist movement, were of bitter enmity against those immediately concerned; but maturer thoughts bring us to face the fact as it stands, and see it as a tragic consequence of war, for which not only Germany, but all the Governments, are responsible. England declares a blockade upon Germany, a virtual attempt to starve sixty million people, and Germany replies, hiding behind legal niceties (ammunition carrying, etc.) and military necessity, which all countries recognise as knowing no law, moral or otherwise. To talk, then, of atrocities and piracy is sheer hypocrisy, and a clear indication of the patriotic squint which afflicts so many people just now. War is a game of killing, and so long as people shout for war, and help in its prosecution, they all bear a responsibility. There can be no moral side to war; to quote *Forward* of May 15:—"To such a pass has Europe come, God help us all! Lies, hate, madmen's yells, rise like smoke to Heaven; an incense to the Brute Beast that lives in each of us, and that has burst the veneers that mankind has so laboriously covered and hidden down the ages." And the Governments of Europe stand indicted.

Labour and Peace Terms.

With a Labour man as Cabinet Minister, we read of the share that Labour will have in helping to formulate the peace settlement at the end of the war. But unless Labour is more revolutionary than it is now, it will be politely ignored. As the *British Columbia Federationist* says:—

"When that gathering does assemble, it will contain the foxiest and most Machiavellian minds in Europe, each with a corps of trained experts to help him. Men, who by birth, training, and instinct, have nothing but contempt for the working classes. Skilled to a degree in every form of polished deceit and lying, fully acquainted with all the subterranean influences which will enter into the negotiations, they will be more than a match for men who think the only factor needed in such a meeting is a conscientious desire to make plans to prevent such another war as this. They will represent the ruling class of Europe. By that time the working class will have done all that was required of it as long as the war lasted, and there its part will cease in so far as its influence in the Conference goes. It may not be physically kicked out, but it will be out-maneuvred by super-astute tactics which it will not even notice while they are being used. A mental picture of the typical British Labour official seated in such an aggregation is nothing short of a shame. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should look into the matter."

Enemies to Order.

The outburst of frenzy against Germans and Austrians (and in one case against a Scotsman) domiciled in England, is the culminating point of the anti-German hysteria that has so persistently been worked up by certain papers. The wholesale looting and smashing of shops and houses, which spread so rapidly in London recently, is proof of the gullibility of the mob. We can understand a mob, filled with righteous indignation, sacking the property and person of an enemy; we can understand them smashing, say, the house of their exploiter, or

the head of a scab; but why, we wonder, do not the mob find out first their real enemy, and then pursue their looting propensities. It might be, seeing that most of the looters were of the exploited class, that a careful examination would reveal as their real enemies the rabid press and shrieking hyenas who call for a vendetta and a complete extermination of the German nation! It certainly would not show the harmless German baker, tailor, or waiter, who, now that their houses are wrecked, become the creditors of the ratepayers. Maybe if the looters had been more worldly-wise they would have paid a little attention to those who sit in high places with one foot on the necks of the workers, and who are the real dangerous enemy about whom the press is silent.

Coalition and Conscription.

The strongest, therefore worst, Government of modern times has collapsed. It has dissolved itself, to save a complete crumbling, as a Liberal Government, and reformed, with additions and deletions, as a National or Coalition Government. It is a striking commentary upon what we have always insisted upon that there is little if any difference between the various parties except the labels. Now that the labels have been torn off, we have a Capitalist Government pure and simple, who will run the Empire upon usual lines in the usual interests. The fact of Arthur Henderson, P.C., Labour M.P., a one-time worker, being in the Cabinet, will not, we hope, buoy the hopes of the workers too greatly, for he, like the rest, is now out after the kudos and a soft job. We await their deliberations with interest, knowing that behind the talk of national interest and so on, there is something significant and sinister. For our part, we are inclined to regard the Coalition as a preliminary to conscription. The clamour of the Tory press and leaders for National Service (whatever that may mean) will not be without effect, and the opportunity is now afforded for the introduction of conscription without any party in particular being responsible. How soon or how late it will come, we do not know; but we are preparing ourselves to resist, and reference to our proposed action is made elsewhere.

Japan and China.

Whilst all eyes are fixed on the struggle taking place in Europe, events are happening in the Far East which are a cynical commentary on the methods of Governments. When the Japanese entered into the war against Germany their Foreign Minister laid stress on that country's violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg; but as soon as they started operations against Kiaochow, they themselves violated the neutrality of China, occupying a large slice of territory and seizing a railway. By the treaty which she has just forced on China at the point of the sword, Britain's ally shows how readily she has learnt the lessons of Western diplomacy. Whilst Britain's hands are tied in Europe, the Mikado and his Ministers calmly proclaim what amounts to a "Protectorate" over China, and grab railway concessions which had been ear-marked by British firms. Now, this in the ordinary way would not interest English workers very much; but in a recent issue of the *Nation* we are told that while the British Government can do nothing at present, they cannot accept the China-Japan Treaty as binding, and—well, perhaps British workers may have to go and fight the Japs to settle the question, because by the Treaty of 1911 Britain and Japan guaranteed the "integrity and independence of China." Thus another "scrap of paper" goes into the diplomatic dustbin. It is amusing to recall that when the Mikado declared war on Germany he said: "It is with profound regret that we, in spite of our ardent devotion to the cause of peace, are thus compelled to declare war, especially at this early period of our reign, and while we are still in mourning for our lamented mother." Poor little orphan, how he must weep at having to keep the piece of China!

GOVERNMENT.

By JOHN TAMLYN.

(Conclusion.)

The principal method by which Governments divert the minds of the people from any consideration of the economic laws which enslave them, is that of dividing them. How do they do this? The answer is, by magnifying the non-essential differences of the people and covering up their essential agreements. Science, concerned only with fact and truth, exalts the essential points of agreement that ought to bind all men together in a social unity. Science says to men: "You are all of one species—white, black, yellow, red. You are all vertebrates: you all have a backbone (or you ought to have). You are all mammals: you all suckle your young. You all have the same red blood flowing through your veins; you all arterialise it by the same common air flowing through your lungs. You all eat much the same food to sustain your life. You all propagate your kind alike. You all are born, live a short while, and die. You are all much the same in the great things that matter. Why, then, should you scratch, bite, and devour each other in your little day? Why struggle with each other? Why not make common cause in the bitter struggle against disease, against ignorance, against famine and storm and heat and cold—against all the forces of Nature that are pitted against you? Why not limit your human struggle to these? Are they not enough to struggle against? Are they not enough to draw out all your powers, to harden you, to quicken you, to refine your animality and make you human? Why waste your little life in fighting your kind? Look at the ants, the bees, the swallows, the rooks, and even the hungry wolves, and learn a lesson in social unity. They do not struggle against each other: they strive to hold themselves intact within their species.

"And even if a hungry wolf, hard pressed, does now and then break through the social bond and destroy his fellow, he is only guided by Nature's instinct, as you admit. He has not your reason, your knowledge of the facts, your power to select and organise them—so you say. He has not the brain and conscience to transcend his environment—so you say. Well, then, where comes in the superiority of your brain and conscience if you can only fight each other for parts of what you might hold together in unity? Where is your superiority, if all your knowledge is only knowledge to kill you, to divide you, to make the fair earth a desert with your squabbles; if all the knowledge you acquire is only used to make you more capable of destroying somebody else? If this is the only result of your advance in knowledge, where shall we find your superiority over the brutes?"

In this way speaks true Science. Then Government takes up the parable. Ah! it says, it is all very well for Science to tell you that you are all of one species; but there are higher races and lower, there are superior and inferior. You, the white men of the Caucasian race, are the superior; they of the black and yellow races are the inferior.

But Science speaks not of superior and inferior; it speaks of gains and losses. If we have gained in some things, we have lost in others. If we have gained mentally, we have lost physically. If the man we call savage or semi-savage has less mentality, he has keener senses and a stronger physique than us. We lose our hair and our teeth, and are a prey to manifold nervous diseases. The savage retains his hair and his teeth in old age; his sight and hearing are keener. He has not the cares and fears of our complex life. Absence of these and greater physical health are his compensations, given by a kind Nature, who rewards justly according to the capacities which have been exercised and developed. But Governments, who, of course, know more about us than the great mother who formed us and brought us forth, must speak of "inferiors" and "superiors." They, the blacks, the reds, and the yellows, are the inferior races; and so far as they fail to come up to our standard, they are bad, and we must civilise them. Of course, Governments do not mean by this that they desire them to reach our standard. What they really mean is that we must steal their lands and enslave them. But of course it would not do to put it this way, or it might start the people thinking of other thieves who rob and enslave them at home.

But at least it might occur to the people that if these Governments are really anxious to civilise other people, they might begin by putting their own people right at home. They might begin by banishing the poverty and squalor that lie about our own doors. They might abolish their own slums. They might

reduce the hours of labour, so that our own people might become something nobler than mere beasts of burden. They might put something more attractive about them than drink and sordid surroundings. They might help them to appreciate the music, painting, sculpture, literature, and drama which the best of our race have bequeathed us. All this they might do; all this they would do if their object was to improve the people. But this is not their object. The object of the Governments is to keep the many poor and enslaved in order that they may minister to the privileged few. This object is revealed at every turn. Never is anything given by Governments to the people without its being preceded by an agitation from the people, generally accompanied by the murder and imprisonment of many of their leaders. And when it is conceded under this pressure, Government ever remains the same and watches for its opportunity to take it back again.

So that the progress of the people stands revealed as a struggle against Government, and never without this struggle has a Government enlarged the freedom of the people. We thus see that Government is always the enemy of the people, fighting to retain privileges for a few, and only giving way, even in the smallest matters, when beaten by strenuous agitation.

To sidetrack the people in this agitation for betterment at home, Governments are always prepared to plunge them into wars. For this reason they keep up national frontiers and stimulate national hatreds. A man on one side of a river is called a Frenchman; a man on the other side of the river is called a German. A man on one side of a mountain is called a Russian; a man on the other side is called an Austrian. The Frenchman should hate and slay the German, and the Russian should hate and slay the Austrian. Why ought a Frenchman to slay a German, and a Russian an Austrian? Oh! they want our trade and our country, cry the perverted workers. Your trade and your country, deluded slaves! Your masters' trade and your masters' country, maybe. But you have your pittance, enough to keep body and soul together in every nation alike. You come back to the same life of drudgery after all your battles for the Government and your masters. Why not, then, leave your masters to fight their battles with the kings and Governments and masters in other countries, and set about freeing yourselves from them in your own? Freeing yourselves from your masters in your own country! This is the thing that matters: and realised and determined, it might with ease be done.

Ah! but to get the workers to realise it—there's the rub! There is such a trained host to prevent them realising it. Pulpit, press, politicians—all the paid apologists for Government and for the slave institutions for which it stands. And yet it seems that you workers ought to realise it, in spite of all the efforts to pervert you. The facts are so obvious and palpable—under your nose. When you have come back from your fights against Germans, Frenchmen, Russians, or Englishmen, have you found your lot any different at home? Has not there been the same little house, the same hard work, the same scanty fare waiting for you? Have not your masters, who promised you work on your return, sneered at your one leg or one arm, and told you that they have been obliged to fill your place, and that now you are useless to them? Has not your Government left you again and again to eke out an existence in the streets or hobble to the workhouse?

Surely these facts are so plain that no oratory of press or platform can hide them from you. All your fighting and all your working leave you poor. There is your position. Then if all your fighting and all your working leave you poor, it must be because your rulers have you nicely tied to a set of institutions which hinder all your efforts to free yourselves. These institutions I have already pointed out. What, then, is your first step? You must turn your back upon these institutions; you must cast no votes to run them; you must send no men of the working class to Parliament to run them. You give the Church the go-by because you have found that it sanctions property for some and poverty for others. You must now take the same attitude towards the State, which maintains the institutions which determine property for some and poverty for others. You must not cast votes or send men to Parliament to help the capitalist to run private property and wage-slavery. What would you say of slaves who sent their spokesmen to the council of the masters to discuss with them how they should wear their yoke? What would you say of some old barndoor fowls (as old William Morris would put it) which should send their representative to a council of foxes to discuss how they should be eaten? What would you say of a nation at war which sent its generals to the camp of the enemy to discuss with the enemy how best to beat it? And do not forget that you

are at war, and that Parliament is the headquarters of your enemy.

Oh! you say, we do not send working-class Members to run their show, as you put it; we send them to abolish it!

Easy, please! Before your men enter the political arena they take an oath or affirm that they will be loyal to the King and the Constitution. Is it not so? So that if they do this, while they mean to abolish both, they are liars before they enter. But it matters little. The point is, that when they have entered, if they do not help the others to run the Constitution they soon find themselves outside. Is not this so? Have you known any to remain there who persisted in questioning the basis of the present order? Have they not all to fall into line and help the others to patch and mend on the existing basis? Improvements in the property system, improvements in wage-slavery, if you like; but property for some and wage-slavery for the rest, or you move outside.

But suppose you did succeed in filling Parliament with your own men, and suppose they did succeed in voting out the other side; do you think the propertied class would be vanquished by votes and the political machine of their own making? Can you be such dear innocents as to believe this?

Suppose some thieves robbed you and yours on a lonesome way, would you expect them to return your property because you retired and passed a pious resolution that it was the proper thing for them to do? Scarcely, I think. You would expect the thieves to say: "We have the property, and you will have to get some other power than mere votes and words before we shall be brought to give it up." So your capitalists of Parliament would reply. "You hold the votes, but we still hold the economic power; and unless you are solid enough to withhold your labour, and cut us off at the source, we will suspend Parliament and fight you in the street."

Therefore the first step of the worker must be a retreat from Parliament and politics. Having turned his back upon the institutions of the enemy, his next step is to respect himself: rely on himself, and seek his salvation from his own common-sense and solidarity. But real progress is slow, and illusions die hard. In spite of his hard lot and the most terrible facts against it, the worker will tenaciously still persist in hoping and believing that his salvation is going to come from Governments, politicians, and rulers, who in some strange way he still believes run the game for his good, instead of, as is the fact, for his goods. It is not stupidity; it is the result of centuries of perversion of will, instinct, and reason by priests, politicians, and rulers, which has eaten into the very marrow of his mind.

Said an intelligent workman to me the other day: "Oh, our Government is now educating the common people toward freedom. Don't you believe it?" "No," I said; "I can believe the people are becoming educated in spite of them." "But why not by them?" "Because I cannot square it with their interest. Look here," I said, "if I had a dog who ate all the rabbits he caught instead of bringing them to me, would that dog be any use in getting my living?" "No," he replied. "Well, then, if the workers became so educated that they consumed all the wealth they produced, would they any longer be of use in getting a living for their masters?" "No," he said, "they would not." "Very well, then," I said, "how can we expect rulers and masters, who live upon the people, to educate the people, since such education would mean that the people would no longer make a living for them, and they, their masters, would have to get off their backs and make a living for themselves?"

Yet another cries: "Then may we not trust any to do us good?" To this question replies a good old Book, which, if read as other books, will yield us much wisdom. It says: "Put not your trust in princes, or in any child of man, for there is no help in them." This is very plain, and in it lies the whole matter. If the worker yearns for representatives, delegates, and saviours to take the burden from his shoulders, let him remember the words: "No man is strong enough to bear much power." And power grows by what it feeds on. The workers must save themselves or remain slaves.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

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"THE COUNTRY."

If we agree to the interpretation given it by those who talk the most about it, "the country" is the soil, the territory belonging to the State of which one is a subject. But States have only arbitrary limits; such limitation most frequently depends upon the issue of battles. Political groups were not always constituted in the same manner as they exist to-day, and to-morrow, if it pleases those who exploit us to make war, the issue of another battle may cause a portion of the country to pass under the yoke of another nationality. Has it not always been the same throughout the ages? As, in consequence of the wars they have made upon each other, nations have appropriated, then lost again or retaken the provinces which separated their frontiers, it follows that the patriotism of these provinces, tossed first to this side, then to that, consisted in fighting sometimes under one flag, sometimes under another, in killing their allies of the day before, in struggling side by side with their enemies of the day after—first proof of the absurdity of patriotism.

And, moreover, what can be more arbitrary than frontiers? For what reason do men located on this side of a fictitious line belong to a nation more than those on the other side? The arbitrariness of these distinctions is so evident that nowadays the racial spirit is claimed as the justification for parcelling people into distinct nations. But here again the distinction is of no value, and rests upon no serious foundation, for every nation is itself but an amalgamation of races quite different from each other, not to speak of the interminglings and crossings which the relations operating among nations, more and more developed, more and more intimate, bring about every day. According to such a method of calculation, the ancient division of France into provinces was more logical, for it took into account the ethnic differences of the populations. Yet to-day even this consideration would no longer have any value; for the human race is moving too rapidly towards unification and the absorption of the variations which divide it, to leave any distinctions remaining save those of climate and environment which will have been too profound to be completely modified.

But wherein the inconsistency is still greater, on the part of the major portion of those who go to get themselves killed without having any motive for hatred against those designated to them as their enemies, is that the soil which they thus go forth to defend or to conquer does not and will not belong to them. This soil belongs to a minority of property-owners, who, sheltered from all danger, bask tranquilly in their chimney-corners, while the workers foolishly go out to slay each other, stupidly permitting themselves to take up arms for the purpose of wresting from others the soil which will serve their masters as a means to exploit themselves—the workers—still further. We have seen in fact that property does not belong to those who possess it: robbery, pillage, assassination, disguised under the pompous names of conquest, colonisation, civilisation, patriotism, have been its not least important factors. We shall not, therefore, repeat what we have already said concerning its formation; but if the workers were logical, instead of defending "the country" by fighting—*other workers*, they would begin by getting rid of those who command and exploit them; they would invite all the workers, of whatever nationality, to do the same, and would all unite in production and consumption at their ease. The earth is vast enough to support everybody. It is not lack of room, nor the scarcity of provisions that has brought about these bloody wars in which thousands of men have cut each other's throats for the greater glory and profit of a few; on the contrary, it is these iniquitous wars to which the desires of rulers, the rivalries of the ambitious, the commercial competition of the great capitalists have given birth, which have fenced off the peoples as distinct nations, and which, in the Middle Ages, brought about those plagues and famines that mowed down those whom the wars had spared.

Just at this point, however, the capitalist, and with him the gullible patriot, interrupt, exclaiming: "But if we no longer had an army the other Great Powers would come in and make laws for us, massacre us, and impose conditions upon us still harder than those we are now subjected to." Some, even though not believing in patriotism, exclaim: "We are not patriots; certainly property is badly divided, society does need reformation; but admit with us at least that France is in the vanguard of progress. To let it be dismembered would be to permit a step backward, to lose the fruit of past struggles; for, vanquished by a despotic Power, what would become of our liberties?"

(Concluded on page 46.)

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STOP THE WAR!

Yes, we say "Stop the War!" and from every one of the warring nations we shall have an echo of our cry. In spite of civil and military censors, we know that the peoples of Europe are heart-sick of the awful slaughter; and the rulers are also beginning to wonder when and how it can be stopped before it is too late to save their thrones. In Russia the people are getting restive; in Germany they are beginning to find out how they were misled by their rulers; in France, it is said that the people are against another winter's campaign; and in this country the Press no longer speaks of a triumphal march into Berlin. Even in Italy—whose "statesmen" have found the Allies' bribes more advantageous than those of Germany and Austria—the people have only been seduced from their neutrality by a lying Press, and will soon find out the trickery by which they were led astray. The time, therefore, is ripe for an active "Stop the War" campaign, and we hope that all those who realise the tragedy of this awful waste of life will throw themselves into the campaign with courage and determination.

If we ask the soldiers of all the armies, "Why do you fight?" very few could give a satisfactory answer. After ten months' fighting, and in spite of all the Blue Books and White Papers, and the numberless newspaper and magazine articles, and books and pamphlets, we are as far off as ever from understanding the objects for which the Governments of the various countries are striving. One thing can be said with absolute certainty—the working class of none of the countries will gain any relief from the grinding toil and misery which is their usual lot. Let us try to imagine a gigantic pair of scales on which to balance the losses and gains of the war up to date. On one scale you place the three million dead and disabled fighters; on the other side, what will you put to balance it? Even if you wait till the end of the war, what on earth can you put in the opposite scale to balance that ghastly mass of human suffering? Can aught compensate for the tears and anguish of the stricken mother, wife, or orphan? Will idle words about vindicating national honour be any balm to the warrior broken and mangled? No! nothing can be given in return, nothing can be gained that will not be settled ultimately around a table. That being so, the continuance of this insensate slaughter is the maddest crime of history, and those, all those, who assist in its prosecution are the criminals. True, we hear the answer, "If we stop now, we shall be overwhelmed and crushed." But such would not be the case. All the Powers are really anxious to cease, but none of the Powers will be bold enough to cry, "Hold, enough!" One must cry first, and why should it not be Great Britain? Let us be bold, therefore. We dare not, we must not await the pleasure of our Governments. They decided when we should become enemies, let us decide when we shall become friends. It needs the thoughts of the people to be expressed in no uncertain or ambiguous way that they detest the war and all its barbarities and horrors, and the will of the people once openly shown will of itself be sufficient. No war is possible which is opposed to public sentiment. Already that sentiment

is changing, but timid of expressing itself. Let us make it stronger by our agitation, and then indeed will the way be paved to stop the war.

The longer we wait, the more our liberties at home are endangered. The reactionary parties in every country are taking advantage of the war to work their evil ways, and unless the struggle soon comes to an end, the men in the trenches will find on their return that the freedom they have fought to defend has vanished.

THE FRAUD OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT.

Anarchists have rarely been sparing in their criticism of the existing social order, but never was such criticism more fully justified than at the present. At first sight there would appear to be nothing very remarkable about the recent changes in the Cabinet. In order to bring the war to a speedy and successful conclusion, the Prime Minister invites the leaders of the Opposition Party to share with him the responsibilities of office. The offer has been accepted, and Unionist and Liberal appear to be working in harmony for the national welfare. This party fusion in political circles finds expression in the Press, for we now have the novel incident of the *Daily Chronicle* appealing confidently to the diplomatic skill of the Marquis of Lansdowne to embroil Turkey in a war with Bulgaria in order to relieve the Allies of their embarrassments in the Dardanelles. Indeed, we are being assured on all hands that national confidence has once more been restored by the coming into office of what is described as "a strong National Government containing the best men of both parties."

It is interesting to notice in passing that there is a close analogy between the attitude of people generally towards the question of Anarchy and the State, and their first impressions of the economic aspect of Socialism. The first and greatest objection to Socialism which the average worker puts forward is that the whole idea is an impossible one, because it presupposes a state of society in which there will be no master class to "give" him work or "pay" him wages. He cannot conceive of society without a capitalist class owning and controlling industry. As far as he knows, there always has been a class "on top," and so he concludes that this is the natural and eternal order of things.

So with regard to the State, his views are much the same. He quite wrongly assumes that the State always has existed, and that it always will do so. Somebody, he argues, must govern and be at the head of affairs, or else society would very quickly fall to pieces. That society supports the State, and that the State controls but does not support society, is not at all obvious to him. It cannot, however, be disputed that these superficial and inaccurate views on the question of government are very generally accepted, and have tended very largely to reconcile an unreflecting people to that outrage upon reason and honesty alike which has been committed against them by their rulers. For, certainly, when it is submitted to careful analysis the situation will be found to be astounding in its audacity. In order that this may be clearly understood, it must be remembered that government in this country has for about a hundred years been in the hands of either the Liberal or Conservative Party. (Special reference to the Labour Party is unnecessary, for however much their representatives may boast of their independence, their actions prove them to be more Liberal than the Liberals.) The stock-in-trade of each of the two parties is largely composed of a wealth of vituperative abuse of each other. The method of procedure of the parties is so familiar that it scarcely needs to be mentioned. If the Liberals, for example, introduce a measure, the Tories as one man denounce it as dangerous and "Socialistic." If the Tories bring in legislation, the Liberals unite to howl it down as imperilling the liberties of the people.

In view of the present-day fraternising of the leaders of both parties, it is interesting to recall what has happened at every election. Each of the parties appeals to the country to give them the majority of seats. The basis of these appeals has always been the same—that it would be in the highest degree dangerous to the national interests to let their opponents form a Government. As soon as the election is over the defeated party commences a campaign in press and on platform to induce the electors "to turn out this rotten Government." The campaign is sooner or later crowned with success, and the electorate, forgetful of the enthusiasm with which they voted for the said "rotten Government," put the party in power in the minority, and the Opposition gleefully picks up the plums of

office. The new Opposition then takes up the game of Government-baiting until by the same means as their opponents they scramble back into office once again. So the game goes on. Liberal in—Tory out; Tory in—Liberal out. This absurd farce has become one of the recognised national institutions, and is gravely described as "the swing of the pendulum," or, more accurately, as "the game of ins and outs."

But the blame must not be entirely placed upon the shoulders of a misguided electorate. The masses are hypnotised by the catch-cries of a lying party press, and are carefully "educated" in schools and political clubs, from pulpit and platform, until it is impossible for them to distinguish truth from falsehood. But out of this welter of party humbug and hypocrisy one fact has hitherto stood out quite distinctly. Each of the rival crowds has consistently declared that "the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and his dominions" depends absolutely upon their own party holding the reins of government, and that the Empire would be in danger of disruption if their opponents were to control the State. This is the politico-moral basis of the struggle between Liberals and Tories. They even go so far as to excuse their own inaction when in office by insisting that their time is too fully occupied by correcting the grave blunders of their predecessors to attend to matters of social reform.

The justification for this *résumé* of the patent facts of political chicanery is to be found in the present situation. For nine years the Liberals have used every means in their power to keep the Tories out of office. Countless speeches have been delivered, torrents of eloquence have been poured forth, denouncing the national crimes of Toryism; they were "Ulster traitors" and "rebels," "militants," "food-taxers," "last-ditchers," "land-grabbers"—in short, reactionaries of the very worst type. The greatest crime the meek and mild Labour Party ever committed was to occasionally "let the Tory in" at some by-election. Yet when the most critical time in the history of the country arrives, when from the Radical standpoint national interests demand that every Tory in the land should be interned with the Germans in the Isle of Man, the Liberal Government cordially invites these same Tories to join with them to form a Coalition Government!

A two-fold excuse for this inconsistency (to use no stronger term) is put forward by political apologists, and it will repay careful examination. It is claimed that the gravity of the situation is such that the best statesmen of the land are required to carry on the Government; and that party politics are to be ignored for the period of the war. These admissions are very valuable, inasmuch as they justify the Anarchist position up to the hilt. Who are these "great statesmen"? The men their present colleagues have fought tooth and nail for the past thirty or forty years. They are invited to assist in carrying on the greatest and most difficult war the English have ever waged—and yet (irony of history that it is!) they were driven from office amid a storm of national indignation nine years ago for their utter failure to carry on a relatively insignificant Colonial campaign! A study of the political speeches of the present Liberal leaders for 1905 only is the most ironic comment on the present situation that can possibly be made. But where are we to find better men? Where, indeed. England has chosen these men, who by their own admission are incapable of ruling, as her rulers, and she must abide by the consequences of her choice. A more rotten, patched-up crowd of political adventurers it would be hard to discover anywhere. It is only as yesterday that the country was ringing with the Marconi scandals. Tory leaders then denounced Liberal statesmen as little better than thieves and liars, gamblers with the public money of the State. To-day these same Tories sit in the same Cabinet with the men they denounced as cads. After this it will be time wasted to denounce the hypocrisy of "honourable" and "right honourable" politicians. Then we are told that party politics are laid aside now. What is this but to admit the futility of party politics? What use can Liberalism, Labourism, or Toryism be to the country, if in the hour of danger these things for which men have striven and argued for sixty years must be thrown aside like worthless toys? It is plain that no political programme can serve the national needs. It is plain that the Liberals have failed to govern; that they have taken unto themselves several other disreputable failures worse (if that were possible) than themselves. Those simple facts will burn themselves into the people's minds in time. They will realise that the State is a curse and not a blessing; that it is as unnecessary as it is useless. Anarchist propaganda should be redoubled, for the day of the Anarchist Commune may not be so far distant as some would suppose. To work, comrades!

OTTO LEROY.

ITALY ALSO!

We had hoped that the Italian workers would be able to resist the governing classes and affirm to the last their brotherhood with the workers of all countries, and their resolution to persevere in the struggle against the exploiters and oppressors, for the real emancipation of mankind. The fact that the great majority of Socialists and Syndicalists, and all the Anarchists (except a very few) were solid against war, added to the evident general disposition of the masses, gave us this hope that Italy would escape the massacre and keep all her forces for the works of peace and civilisation.

But, alas! no. Italy, too, has been dragged into the slaughter. The same Italians who were oppressed and famished in the country of their birth, and were compelled very often to go and earn their bread in far-off lands; the same Italians who to-morrow will be famished and compelled to emigrate again, are now killing and being killed in defence of the interests and ambitions of those who deny them the right to work and live a decent life.

It is astonishing and humiliating to see how easily the masses can be deceived by the coarsest lies!

All these dreary months the Italian capitalists have been enriching themselves by selling at enhanced prices to Germany and Austria an immense quantity of things useful for the war. The Italian Government has been trying to sell to the Central Empires Italian neutrality in exchange for more additions to the dominions of the Savoyan King. And now, because they could not obtain all they wanted, and have found it more advantageous to cast in their lot with the Allies, they speak, with brazen face, as if they were disinterested knights-errant, of the defence of civilisation and the vindication of "poor Belgium." Yet their mask is very transparent. They say that they go to war for the liberation of the peoples from foreign domination, and they try to inflame the young men with the glories of the Italian struggle against the Austrian tyranny; but they try to crush into submission the Arabs of Tripoli, they want to keep the Greek islands "provisionally" occupied at the time of the war with Turkey, they ask for territories and privileges in Asia Minor, they occupy a part of Albania, which certainly is not Italian in any sense of the word, and pretend to annex Dalmatia, where the Italians are only a small percentage of the population. Really, they pretend to have a claim on every country which they have, or think they have, the power to take and keep. One place ought to belong to Italy because it was once conquered by the Romans of yore, another because there was a Venetian counting-house there, another because it is inhabited by many Italian immigrants, another because it is necessary for military security; and every other place in the world because it may be useful to the development of Italian commerce.

But there is nothing astonishing in this: Governments and the dominating classes in every country have always invoked international justice when they were weak; but as soon as they are, or think they are, strong enough, they begin to dream of universal domination. They protest now against the domineering spirit of the Germans, but as a matter of fact they are all "Germans."

What seems less natural, and is more disheartening, in Italy is the conduct of the Republicans. They affected to put above all the question of the form of government; for them the first, the all-important question was the abolition of the Monarchy. But it has been sufficient to appeal to their national passions, and all their desire of liberty, all their hatred against the House of Savoy, has disappeared. They have done their utmost to resuscitate in the masses the old ideal of patriotism, which was developed in the time when national independence seemed to be the means for attaining emancipation from poverty and bondage, and which had decayed in consequence of the experience that a national Government is as bad as a foreign one. They have raised the cry "War or Revolution," and when the King, perhaps to save himself from the revolution, has declared war, they have put themselves in the mass at the service of the King. What, then, about the Republic? Many of them still say that they want war in order to facilitate the revolution; but what nonsense! If Italy is victorious, certainly it will be to the exclusive advantage of the Monarchy; and, on the other hand, we cannot conceive that the Republicans would be capable of the infamy of pushing the people into war with the secret hope that they would be beaten and their country invaded and devastated.

We do not know, for want of reliable information, the present situation in Italy, and what are the true factors that have determined so quick a change in her attitude. But one redeeming feature is revealed by the news received in London.

The Italian Government has felt that it was not safe to make war

without suppressing every liberty, and putting in prison a great number of Anarchists.

This means that the Anarchists remain loyal to their flag to the last, and, what is more important, that the Government fears their influence on the masses.

This gives us the assurance that as soon as the war fever has calmed down we will be able to begin again our own war—the war for human liberty, equality, and brotherhood—and in better conditions than before, because the people will have had another experience, and what a terrible one! That from the Government can be expected only injustice, misery, and oppression, and then, as a change, slaughterings on a colossal scale; that patriotism, nationalism, racial rivalry are only means for enslaving the workers, and that their salvation lies in the abolition of Government and Capitalism.

E. MALATESTA.

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE PRINTER.

In the world-movement of progress, the printer is a very necessary unit. Progress is best obtained by the spreading of ideas. The greatest power for this is the Press. The printer is, as it were, the distributor of ideas. The philosopher and the thinker are entirely dependent on him.

The question is, how far is the printer justified in refusing to distribute these ideas?

There has been some acute feeling in this matter lately amongst some comrades. They complain that their ideas have been either repressed or misrepresented. I suggest, therefore, that this matter be threshed out.

A printer has his own conscience. He has his own ideas of things that be. A printer who is also an editor is in a double predicament. He is frequently called upon to print ideas which may run counter to his own. His teetotal paper may receive articles opposed to his policy. Should he print all these?

To my mind, a printer who believes in absolute freedom of expression is not justified in refusing these views contrary to his own. This is what I understand FREEDOM should do. And I wish to say here that I believe the Editor has acted consistently in this respect. The viewpoint of the paper is admittedly anti-war. That is simply because the majority of the writers are anti-war. I do not think those who support a temporary pro-war policy are justified in their complaints. There have been, if I remember rightly, articles from both sides printed in the paper. Naturally, the Editor cannot print all the articles he receives. Pro-war and anti-war are equally treated. I am speaking from personal knowledge of the editorial department.

I suggest that a column or so be devoted to a free and frank discussion on the war, both as affecting the movement and the policy of FREEDOM. This will do away with any lingering doubts concerning partisanship. An editor is always open to suspicion. He cannot please everybody. And, being human, he is liable to err. Another editor in his place would make errors of another sort.

Let us be charitable. An editor acts according to his lights, and to his printer's conscience. His work is a thankless task. May all the gods of the Parthenon preserve me from the glory of the editorial chair!

L. A. M.

[Our comrade is mistaken in thinking we have refused to publish views on the war contrary to our own. In fact, the prominence we gave to pro-war articles led comrades to think they represented our view. Our correspondence columns are open to anyone who wishes to criticise our attitude.—Ed. FREEDOM.]

WHY DO MEN ENLIST?

I have often wondered what it is that makes men leave homes and wives and comfort to endure the hardships of war? Why? Is it merely a taking of the line of least resistance? Have posters and recruiters, professional and amateur, become so all-powerful that it is easier to enlist than not to enlist? Perhaps some have enlisted for such reasons, but the majority have not. Asked, they would probably say they joined the Army because it was their duty—i.e., for patriotic reasons.

At the word "patriotic" I can see a scornful smile pass over your face, O reader; but be not so hasty. These men whom you have perhaps sometimes sneered at are dying in defence of an ideal—in defence of their country, the noblest kind of death a man can die, according to current notions. If their ideal had been a different one, had it been an ideal of brotherhood and disarmament, or Socialism or Anarchism, they would still have died in its defence. Rather, then, than jibing at soldiers in general, it might be as well if Anarchists recognised them as fellow idealists, and strove to point out the more just cause of Democracy.

Looked at in this light, the war is a forerunner of a yet more glorious conflict when the fighters will be the same—the sturdy unconquerable people of the world—but their ideals will be different. I sometimes dream and long for *the day* as I watch rank after rank of bronzed healthy men pass my window, and have a vision of the same resistless army pouring forth against the foe within the gates—against Church and State, and all the attendant evils.

MILES.

(Continued from page 43.)

Most assuredly we have no intention at this time of tracing a line of conduct for Anarchists in case of war. Such conduct must depend upon circumstances, condition of mind, and a multitude of things which it is impossible to foresee; we desire only to treat the question from the standpoint of logic, and logic tells us that wars being enterprises for the profit of our exploiters solely, we can take no part in them.

We have seen that no matter whence authority proceeds, he who is subjected to it is always a slave. The history of the proletariat proves to us that national governments are not afraid to shoot down their "subjects" when the latter demand a few liberties. What more, then, could foreign exploiters do? Our enemy is *the master*, no matter to what nationality he belongs! Whatever the excuse with which a declaration of war be decorated or disguised, there can be nothing in it at bottom but a question of bourgeois interest: whether it be disputes on the subject of political precedence, commercial treaties, or the annexation of colonial countries, it is the advantage of the privileged alone—of rulers, merchants, or manufacturers—which is at stake. The republicans of to-day humbug us nicely when they congratulate us upon the fact that their wars are no longer made in the interest of dynasties, the republic having replaced kings. Caste interest has replaced dynastic interest—that is all; what difference does it make to the worker? Conquerors, or conquered, we shall continue to pay the tax, to die of hunger when out of work; the almshouse or the hospital will continue to be our refuge at old age. And the capitalistic class would like us to interest ourselves in their quarrels! What have we to gain by it?

As to fearing a worse condition, the stoppage of progress in case a nation should disappear, this is failing to take into account what international relations are nowadays, and the general diffusion of ideas. A nation, to-day, might be divided, parcelled out, dismembered, its name taken away; yet you could not succeed, short of utter extermination, in changing its proper foundation, which is diversity of character and temperament, the very nature of the races composing it. And if war were declared, all these liberties, real or pretended, which are claimed as our special lot, would be speedily suspended, the Socialist propaganda muzzled, authority reinstated in the hands of the military power; and we should no longer have anything for the most thorough absolutism to envy.

War, consequently, can bring no good to the workers; we have no interests engaged in it, nothing to defend but our skins; it is our lookout to defend them still better by not exposing ourselves to get holes put through them, for the greater profit of those who exploit and govern us. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, have an interest in war; it enables them to preserve the armies which keep the people respectful, and defend their institutions; through it they can succeed in forcing the products of "their industry" on others, opening up new markets with cannon shots. They alone subscribe to the loans which war necessitates, the interest upon which we, the workers, alone pay. Let the capitalists fight themselves, then, if they want to; once more, it is no concern of ours. And, moreover, let us revolt once for all; let us endanger the privileges of the bourgeoisie, and it will not be long till we see those who preach patriotism to us, appealing to the armies of their conquerors, be they German, Russian, or of no matter what country. They are like Voltaire, their patron: he did not believe in God, but judged that some religion was necessary to the common people; they have frontiers between their slaves, but for themselves they mock at such when their interests are at stake.

There is no "country" for the man truly worthy of the name; or at least there is but one—that in which he struggles for true right, in which he lives and has his affections; but it may extend over the whole earth! Humanity is not to be chucked into little pigeon-holes, wherein each is to shut himself up in his corner, regarding the rest as enemies. To the genuine individual all men are brothers, and have equal rights to live and to evolve according to their own wills upon this earth, which is large enough and fruitful enough to nourish all. As to your countries by convention, the workers have no interest in them, and nothing in them to defend, consequently, on whichever side of the frontier they may chance to have been born, they should not, on that account, have any motive for mutual hatred. Instead of going on cutting each other's throats, as they have done up to the present, they ought to stretch out their hands across the frontiers and unite all their efforts in making war upon their real, their only, enemies: authority and capital.—JEAN GRAVE, in "Moribund Society and Anarchy."

SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

The question which is agitating men's minds more than any other at the present time is that of the imminent introduction of compulsory military service. When the crisis in the Cabinet resulted in the formation of a Coalition Ministry, it became an open secret that conscription was in the air. As Anarchists, of course, we are opposed to all forms of compulsion; but to those British workers who still labour under the delusion that they are or have been free, we would say, what sort of freedom is it that gives the bottom dog of society the choice of enlistment or starvation? It may not be very apparent on the surface, but it is very certain that the past few months has seen the worst form of conscription instituted in this country. Among other Government bodies, the Local Government Board has brought pressure to bear upon various corporations, directing them to dismiss all employees of military age. When confronted with the question of who should work the tramcars and omnibuses, the Board answer that the people must walk.

Let us contrast this attitude with that taken up against the London County Council tramway men. The great charge brought against them was that by their action in striking they were inconveniencing members of the public, forcing them to walk—so apparently any such action as that suggested by the Local Government Board would constitute a virtuous act, seeing that it was ordered by those in authority, whereas the tramway men are guilty of a heinous crime merely because they withheld their labour in order to try to obtain their demands. The hypocrisy of the British has never been so apparent as at present, for whilst ostensibly fighting for freedom in Flanders and France, the most despicable tactics have been pursued in England. Employers have refused to employ young unmarried men, and so have driven them to starvation or enlistment. In face of this, conscription seems almost the lesser of two evils, and may even prove of value in stirring up revolutionary feelings among the masses. The freedom from compulsory service has been responsible for making the Britisher feel that he was possessed of an inviolate personal freedom not shared by those in other European countries. He has given himself airs, feeling he belonged to a race apart, and has fed upon his so-called freedom until he actually believed in its existence. But all this is now ended; and if conscription actually materialises, then it may be the revolution in England will be hastened thereby.

"Surrender of the tramway men." So the capitalist posters put it, and when we open our papers we find laudatory articles about the astute order that commanded men of military age to return their uniforms, as they would not be allowed to restart work. It is more than probable that, strike or no strike, the L.C.C. would, acting under instructions from the Government, sooner or later have impressed men for national service in this fashion. Whether this is so or not remains immaterial. The point to remember is that sectional strikes are bound to fail, and sectional Unions should long ago have given place to an industrial organisation that would have been really effective in a crisis like the present. Our governors know how to organise for war, but we still muddle on like our forefathers with an innocent confidence in the justice of our claims as our sole weapon. Yet these same strikers, futile though their efforts have been, inasmuch as they have during war time dared to strike a blow against their exploiters have done more to fight for freedom than those misguided but heroic souls who have gone off to France in order to save those same exploiters and the oligarchy which rules us. We hope that the tramway men have learned their lesson so well that when they next strike it shall be in company with the railway men, tube men, and all those workers engaged in conveyance or transport. Our tyrants and oppressors do not believe in half-measures, neither should we.

The "Coalition" Government is an established fact, and such are the circumstances attendant upon its formation that the House of Commons must not defeat it, for it seems to be invested with absolute powers in order that the people of Britain, who had no voice in the making of war, shall be mobilised for war, willy-nilly. To quote "Mr. Speaker's" advice: "One of our chief duties is to support those in authority, and not cavil and criticise." To be good docile children, in point of fact. Meanwhile, as though the powers that be are possessed of a sense of humour, Sir Edward Carson is made Attorney-General. It is, indeed, fitting that the man

who has been courageous enough to break every law of the Constitution should fill such a post. But he will remain in the popular mind as the great advocate of disobedience and disloyalty, and no halo that his new position may give him is likely to make us forget his role of chief lawbreaker. Of course, at a time like this a sop had to be thrown to Labour, and we are not surprised that a Labour man is now included in the Cabinet. It is easy to see, however, that Labour's chains are not going to be broken that way.

We are not surprised to learn that Mr. William Brace has gone to the Home Office to assist Sir John Simon—he virtually becomes Minister of Mines. This is the man who informed an audience of wage-slaves that they belonged to a free race, cradled in liberty. But miners would be well advised not to seek their emancipation *via* the Home Office. We have still some remembrance of the Senghenydd disaster.

The recent railway smash at Gretna Green brought a few interesting facts to light—among others the obsolete methods of gas lighting and of shunting still employed. A different system of shunting would have prevented such an accident. We suppose that, as usual, motives of economy are the cause of the whole gruesome business. We are foolish enough to let a gigantic system of profit-making dominate us, and then pretend to be shocked when victims are sacrificed. The same thing appears to be true of the 'Falaba's' boats. At the enquiry into the vessel's loss it transpired that the boats were leaky and rotten, and that many more lives might have been saved if this had not been the case. But sound boats might have involved a slight expense, and after all human life seems very cheap to-day.

A soldier who recently committed suicide gave as his reason for so doing his "regret at joining the Army." The jury brought in a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily of unsound mind." At the inquest on the German Kuepferle, who took his own life in Brixton Prison, the jury returned a verdict of "Felo de se." With such an example of the wisdom of juries before us, who can doubt the intelligence of our race in solemnly accepting a law that permits of such inconsistencies!

M. B. HOPE.

ANTI-CONSCRIPTION LEAGUE.

With the formation of the "Coalition" Government, the agitation for conscription has grown stronger, and unless those opposed to it also increase their efforts, the Government may enforce it at any moment. With a view to combatting compulsory service, and to assist those of military age who have made up their mind to resist regardless of consequences, an Anti-Conscription League has been formed, and already a good number have joined. We hope to work in conjunction with the No-Conscription Fellowship, which has been formed some time. All those willing to help and to become members are requested to write to the Secretary of the League, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W.

An Urgent Appeal.

As a result of the outburst of anti-German feeling in the East End of London, and the demand for the arrest of all Germans, several comrades have been taken away and interned as enemy aliens. Their wives and families are now in a destitute condition, and an appeal has been made on their behalf. Funds are also wanted to send a few necessities to those interned. We hope for an immediate and liberal response, and can assure comrades that the money will be distributed carefully amongst the most urgent cases. Donations should be sent to Manager, FREEDOM Office.

An Appeal for "Freedom."

Owing to the war, our income has been seriously affected, and we ask comrades and friends to help our Guarantee Fund to the best of their ability. Funds are urgently needed to produce FREEDOM regularly. We hope for a good response to this appeal.

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LOTHROP WITHINGTON.

When the torpedo sunk the 'Lusitania' we lost our comrade Lothrop Withington, who was returning from Boston after a brief stay. One of our oldest comrades, and one of the staunchest of fighters, he will be much missed by us in London, where his stalwart figure was well known to all. As a speaker, he always had something interesting to say, and a powerful way of saying it. His bitter opposition to the war will always be our pleasantest recollection of a good comrade.

INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

On Saturday, June 12, the youngsters of the above School have organised a social and whist drive, which will be held at Marsh House. The proceeds will be devoted to the School funds. We hope our comrades will rally round, and give us their support in this new venture. Our third number of the magazine, *Liberty*, has unfortunately been delayed, but will be out in a few days. We have some ripping articles in this issue, and it behoves all our comrades to order a copy now.

Donations—School collection 24s., E. H. 6d., G. W. 2s., W. L. 1s., H. J. 3s.

Ashburton House, Hertford Place, Globe Road, E.

JIMMY.

EPPING FOREST OUTING.

On Sunday next, June 6, an outing to Epping Forest has been arranged, and, with the country now looking splendid, and given fine weather, an enjoyable day should be spent. Comrades should bring their own lunch; tea will be taken at Roserville Retreat, near the King's Oak, High Beech, at 4 o'clock.

Trains from Liverpool Street to Loughton, 10.46; Fenchurch Street, 10.45; calling at all stations. Fare 1s. 4d. return. Cyclists leave Trafalgar Square at 9 a.m., London Hospital 9.30. Come along, comrades, and leave all your worries behind you!

Marsh House will be open as usual the same evening at 8 o'clock.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(April 30—June 2.)

FREEDOM Guarantee Fund.—J. Desser 2s, D. Westwater 2s, F. Crowsley 5s, S. Corio 3s, M. B. H. 2s, Wheatley and Somervell 5s, M. B. 1s. Marsh House (socials and sale of refreshments), week ending April 24, 15s; May 1, £1 8s 6d; May 8, 5s 6d; May 15, 9s 1d; May 22, 13s 3½d.
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Marmol Fund.—J. Tamlyn 6d, T. K. 2s, F. Crowsley 2s.

Marsh House.

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