



Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. XXVIII.—No. 307.

NOVEMBER, 1914.

MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

NOTES.

The Religious Barrier.

It is wonderful to watch the splendid spirit of generosity displayed in making comfortable the Belgian refugees; and the energy and interest exhibited in making up to them, in part at any rate, what they have lost at the hands of devastating invaders, is in some respects an example of the spirit of Communism and fraternity which exists in most people, subverted, however, too often to the demands of Capitalism. But what a striking contrast and damning commentary to the action a short while ago when the cry went up from starving women and children hammering at our gates on the other side, when Dublin was being devastated by the capitalist invader. Then, as now, we had women and children, practically deprived of their all, who called to us for help, which was forthcoming until the clerical hirelings of the capitalist stepped in and, with a cunning born of hypocrisy, prevented these children from coming to England to share the homes of British workers. Realising that the presence of these children was the strongest factor in defeating the men, all efforts were made to keep them in the strike area, and the cry of religious caste was raised. These Irish children were Roman Catholics, and therefore it would be a dastardly act to bring them to English homes, where they might lose touch with their religious belief. The trick succeeded, the children stayed, and the men were beaten. But how short is public memory? The majority of the Belgian refugees are Roman Catholics, and are being brought to English homes indiscriminately; no thought here of preserving their religious belief. Here Capitalism has nothing to lose by their coming; on the contrary, by touching the sympathies of the British public a great impetus will be given to their appeal for recruits, and a seeming justification for the campaign of murder. Were cunning and hypocrisy ever more stupidly displayed?

What Must Christians Do?

"In a world gone Pagan," writes the Rev. Wm. Temple in the *Daily News*, "what is a Christian to do?" Well might the reverend gentleman wonder; but he does not wonder long, for he goes on to tell his readers that their duty, and the duty of Christians generally, is to back the Government and the Army for all they are worth. In other words, this follower of the humble Christ, this teacher of the brotherhood of man, condones murder of man by man, and allies himself with the modern Pharisees. It is, perhaps, no cause for wonderment, when we remember that Dean Inge, no longer gloomy, is reaping a profit from his armament shares out of every shot fired. Deans should know what Christians should do, and he does it. For ever the bulwark of the State, preaching authority, spreading superstition, and fostering the spirit of subjection and subserviency, the Church and its followers will always be found where Capitalism is endeavouring to gain fresh fields for exploitation, or where it is fighting the workers struggling for freedom. The lie of religion has long been exposed, and here, surely, it is nailed to the counter by the actions of its own exponents.

A "Tommy's" Letter.

The following from the letter of a wounded soldier in hospital (not printed in the daily press) is interesting, and shows how much of the gush written about our brave Tommies is true and how much "journalism":—"The capitalists come down here [to the hospital] every day to see us, and feed us up with jam and tracts, also a smile. The Countess of Minto came yesterday, also the Bishop of Southwark; in fact, we are like prize pigs on show for the 'nobs' to pass their time away in viewing, and I tell you we get fed up with it." The lies written around the

sayings of soldiers and sailors which fill our papers to-day, all with the purpose of keeping alive interest and sympathy by touching the human note, represent but one side of the efforts made to excuse murder, plunder, and loot. Whatever else might be said for or against the war, the least that might be done is for a censorship—if we must have one—to be established over the gutter press in their campaign of falsehood. Or is it that the authorities have an interest in this campaign? We would warn our readers not to be carried away by their tales, purposely manufactured with a sinister objective.

"Alien Enemies."

One of the ironies of the war is the arrest of political refugees from Austria and Germany. The fact that they have fled from the clutches of their respective Governments should be sufficient evidence that they are not likely to do anything here on their behalf. But the outcry in the Press against "alien enemies" has sent the police on a hunt everywhere, and, without any discrimination, Austrians and Germans have been arrested wholesale. Many who are political refugees are victims of this panic, and steps must be taken to secure their release. Comrades should collect the evidence on their behalf, and send it direct to the Home Secretary. If we really are fighting Germany and Austria so as to put an end to the tyranny of their rulers, to imprison their victims here seems a step in the opposite direction. Another point is, that when the war is over, and prisoners are exchanged, some of these political refugees may be handed back to the Governments they fled from, thus destroying the right of political asylum. Unless we are very watchful, a good many "rights" will vanish during the war.

Magisterial Impartiality.

The remarkable bias displayed by a Greenwich magistrate recently should not pass without vehement protest. A private soldier of the West Kent Regiment was convicted of looting in the deplorable anti-German riots at Deptford. He was caught by the police in the looted house, and a stolen watch and ring were found hidden in his putties. The magistrate merely bound the man over—thus apparently condoning the action. Although in violent disagreement with our whole system of law and police, yet this extraordinary partiality shows up more vividly than ever the fallibility of those who are placed in authority. We wonder what would have been the sentence meted out to any poor unfortunate who, goaded by hunger, had appropriated these goods from some shop? The whole incident merely still further brings into disrepute the shoddy fabric which is known by the respectable term "law and order."

Education and Criminality.

Under the heading "The Advantages of the Simple Life," we are given some interesting facts concerning the treatment of prisoners. It need not provide very great matter for congratulation that 14,420 less prisoners passed through our prisons than in the previous year. To have still 151,603 prisoners as examples of the civilising effects of our beneficent capitalist system is appalling enough. The report of the Commissioners of Prisons endorses the opinion that the decrease "is due no doubt to education and the higher level of conduct prevailing in the general community to-day; but it is also due to the humanity of the modern prison system. The greatly improved conditions of prison life and labour impress upon offenders the fact that their welfare is desired, and their reformation hoped for by the community." Might we not go further, and, realising that criminality is purely a disease of Capitalism, root it out altogether by removing the cause? Meanwhile, no cant about the advantage of the simple life will remove our responsibility for these 151,603 human derelicts.

ANTI-MILITARISM.

Was it Properly Understood?

In the fact that Anarchists are divided in their attitude towards the war, after all there is no harm. On the contrary, one may be sure that in proportion as the events develop there will grow more and more unity in our opinions, the present divergences inducing all of us to go deeper into certain points of our teachings, which hitherto had been taken more or less on faith. It is only regretful that these discussions begin now, when the danger menacing France and Belgium ought to be met by the united effort of all, to the extent of every one's forces and capacities, and when the Anarchists may have shown that they are not only fine reasoners, but also men of initiative, who have something of their own to say when a country has to live through such a calamity as the one we are now living through.

One of the points which must be reconsidered is, I think, the too great confidence in a general strike, as a means of preventing war. Introduced first as a means to provoke or to inaugurate the Social Revolution, the general strike was recommended later on as a means of preventing war, without noticing for a long time the contradiction which this advice contained.

We said, on the one side, that the true causes of wars were no longer the ambitions of kings, but *Capitalism and State*. "So long as Capitalism and State exist," we used to say, "we shall have wars: they are the unavoidable, fatal consequences of the two. And both Capitalism and State can only be destroyed by a thorough-going revolution. Perhaps even several revolutions will be required to accomplish that destruction."

And then, on the other side, it was asserted that it would be sufficient to have an agreement between the workers of different nations to declare a general strike, as soon as the Governments would intend to go to war, and wars would become impossible!

It came to this: In one sentence it was said that wars are a *necessary* consequence of Capitalism and State; and the next sentence was: "Although we have not yet got rid of Capitalism and State, we can prevent war by a general strike!"

This was a sheer contradiction. Either Capitalism and State are *not* the causes of wars, or wars can *not* be prevented by a general strike. If an international war-strike were possible at the moment of a declaration of war, this would mean that an international Social Revolution was already quite ripe to break out.

Remember that at the same time there was in every country a very numerous section of Socialists—the Social Democrats—who preached to the workers, in accordance with the Marxist teaching, that the abolition of Capitalism cannot be brought about before Capitalism has attained such a development as to concentrate its ever-growing and all-absorbing powers in a few hands, after having destroyed the small capitalists and the small industries. From this assertion it was even deduced that the great States must absorb all the smaller ones. This was, we were told, the proper way towards internationalism.

A few of us tried to prove how false was this teaching, but once it was shared by millions of workers, dazzled by its would-be scientific appearance, in Germany, Austria, and even in France and Italy—how could these millions (even apart from their "patriotism") join in a general strike which would hamper the growth of Capitalism in their country? Everything, on the contrary, would induce them to support their capitalists in extending their powers over new countries, in growing richer and richer, and in rendering the State to which they belonged more and more powerful.

This is why (as I have said already a couple of weeks ago, in a letter addressed to a Russian paper) I began, already ten or twelve years ago, to warn my French friends that they were cherishing a dangerous illusion. A general strike, to be efficacious, must be entered upon by the *two* nations going to fight. But in case of a Franco-German war there was not the slightest chance of this being the case. The German Social Democrats would not think, even for a single moment, of *not* joining the mobilisation; and in such a condition, even one single day of war-strike in France would mean the loss of a province, the gift of a hundred thousand men to the Germans, and the addition of a thousand million francs to the indemnity. No sensible man in France would join the strike.

So it happened in reality.

We must, then, have the courage to recognise that so long as the present economic conditions prevail, there will be nations where not only the capitalist and military classes, but the workers as well, *will continue to consider that wars for the conquest of other people's rich countries and of populations backward in industrial development are the proper means for the enrichment of the whole nation.*

* *

It being so, the question arises: How is anti-militarist propaganda to be conducted?

The reply is evident: It must be supplemented by a promise of direct action. An anti-militarist ought never to join the anti-militarist agitation without taking in his inner self a solemn vow that in case a war breaks out, notwithstanding all efforts to prevent it, he will give the full support of his action to the country that will be invaded by a neighbour, whosoever the neighbour may be. Because, if the anti-militarists remain mere onlookers on the war, they support by their inaction the invaders; they help them to make slaves of the conquered

populations; they aid them to become still stronger, and thus to be a still stronger obstacle to the Social Revolution in the future.

Which shape the help to the invaded nation will take in each individual will depend, of course, upon the individual temperament. He who is bent on rhetorics will not become a fighter, and *vice versa*. But men and women of the most varied capacities will find a full scope for the application of their powers in time of war. It must not be forgotten, indeed, that for every million men fighting in the battle lines there are at least twice, if not thrice, that number of men and women engaged in the support of the armies, the preparation and the transport of supplies and munitions, the removal and the nursing of the wounded, the care of the soldiers' families, and the food supply for the populations remaining at home. Let us only mention how old and young in the French and Russian villages are working now at the ploughing and the sowing of the fields of those fighting in the army; how immense is the number of men and women engaged in this country in freely organised work to aid the nation to pull through the war; or let us remember the immense new-born organisation of the Union of the Zemstvos (County Councils), which is preparing just now to attend to the needs of 750,000 wounded, who are brought to Moscow for further distribution in the provinces, which organisation manages it in an admirable way, by free consent, because it is independent of the St. Petersburg bureaucracy.

* *

Of course, it may and will surely be asked: "But what is to be done if the country which invades another country's territory is itself invaded by a third country?" But this is only dialectical arguing. Every honest man, if he only takes the trouble of paying attention to what is going on in the world, will easily find the reply. He will always know in every particular case who is the real invader, and whose invasion must be resisted. This is why every one who has paid any attention to what has been going on in Europe since the war of 1870, and especially during the last twenty years, knows perfectly well that the aggressor in this war is Germany. And those who did not know it two months ago must see it now, when they learn how carefully the invasion was prepared.

Of course, there are millions of Germans who will not agree that their Fatherland was the aggressor. For forty years they were taught to think so. But whose fault is it? Are we not also guilty ourselves to a great extent, if anti-militarism has been floating till now in generalities, without examining the concrete causes which were leading to this war? When our comrades preached that the present frontiers of the States must remain what they are now, and no war must be fought to alter them, they committed, I must say, an unpardonable blunder. They took matters too easily. They refused to enter into a consideration of the questions of the smaller oppressed nationalities; they did not care to examine the real conditions of entrenched camps like Metz, the Mazur lakes, and the like, which were erected by the Germans for attacking their neighbours, and which must be dismantled if Europe is to have peace; they refused to consider the vassal conditions into which the small nations, like Belgium or Servia, were placed towards their powerful neighbours. They said: "This is politics!" and for that reason dismissed it.

The result was—we see it now—that an immense mass of working men accepted the teaching of their middle classes. The German workers began talking, in their turn, like their bourgeois exploiters, about the necessity of conquering vast territories in the East for sending there the surplus of population; they spoke of colonies wanted for the enrichment of the German nation as a whole; they talked of the wickedness of France and Britain, who had already taken all the richest colonies, and left nothing to the poor Germans; and very few were those who risked to say from time to time that there are German colonies well worth colonising by German emigrants, or that the inner colonisation of the province of Posen with German settlers was a wicked thing. And in the meantime the Social Democratic press spread the idea of a great, powerful Capitalism being a necessary condition for the coming of age of Socialism.

Gradually the workers, not only in Germany, but in all industrial nations as well, began to share more or less similar fallacies. When the Boer War began, great numbers of British working men approved of the conquest, and they began to protest against it only when their sense of fair play was offended by the way in which the war was conducted. The enthusiasm which the robbery expedition to Tripoli provoked at the outset in large sections of the Italian nation was another consequence of the insufficient knowledge of the real causes of wars. And if the Social Democratic representatives in the German Reichstag voted, a few days before the war began, by 100 voices against 14, the immense sums of money asked by the Government for the war, it was again the result of the ignorance in which the masses of all nations were kept, even by the leaders of the advanced parties, of the real causes that prepared this war. (Now they say that they voted that money because they were not told that it was intended to invade Belgium. There are no worse ignoramuses than the willing ones.)

There is not the slightest doubt that if a sound opinion about the great international problems of the day had been elaborated by the joint action of the better informed anti-militarists, and if these opinions had been submitted to a thorough discussion in international congresses, far from awakening national hatred and jealousies, such a discussion would have created an infinitely stronger international anti-militarist feeling. Very possibly this feeling would not have been strong enough to prevent the present war; but every one would have seen who were

the invaders; and it would have been understood that in a war of invasion every one is bound to take sides against the invaders, and to do his utmost, in one way or another, to aid those who try heroically to defend their fields and their cities. There would have been less theoretical discussion, but there would have been more action.

There are two or three more questions which it would be useful to discuss in this connection; but they will have to be left for another article.

P. KROPOTKIN.

DEATH OF ALFRED MARSH.

We deeply regret to state that our comrade Alfred Marsh, the editor of *FREEDOM*, died of cancer on October 13, in his fifty-sixth year. His health of recent years had been rather indifferent, but few suspected cancer as the cause. Two weeks before his death an operation was performed, which gave a slight relief; but the disease had got too firm a hold, and the end came very peacefully. He was cremated at Golders Green on October 16, the ashes being interred at Hastings Cemetery the following day.

For more than twenty years Alfred Marsh had been closely connected with *FREEDOM*, and its existence to day is almost solely due to his courage and his faith in Anarchism. His pen and his purse were always at its service, and on several occasions his last half-sovereign ensured the publication of the paper, especially during the Jingo reaction of 1899-1902, when the movement was at its lowest ebb. As a writer, he was simple and clear, avoiding bombast and verbiage, his "Notes" on the front page being models of conciseness. To him, the Social Revolution meant a revolution in ideas and a clean sweep of the mass of superstition—economic, religious, and sexual—which at present clogs the minds of the people. He believed strongly in the efficacy of cheap literature, and when the opportunity presented itself he always replenished the stock of pamphlets at *FREEDOM* office.

As a comrade and friend, Marsh was true to the core, and during my twelve years' association with him on *FREEDOM* the work was made much lighter by his sympathy and consideration. Although of recent years he had wished to resign his editorship on account of failing health, he continued to write as usual; and his lifelong work for Anarchism should inspire others to follow his example. By his death, the Anarchist movement loses a whole-hearted supporter, and his comrades a lovable and devoted friend.

T. H. KEELI.

In Alfred Marsh we have lost a comrade with whom we have been working in full sympathy for more than twenty-five years. Neither physical fatigue nor a hard struggle for life could keep him aloof from the fight for our ideas of freedom and happiness for all. We feel his loss the more as it comes at a moment when an immense effort has to be made to save from a general wreck the principles of civilisation, brotherhood, and progress which are trampled under in the present war.

Alfred Marsh's clear comprehension of the great problems which stand now before mankind, combined with absolute sincerity and an extreme modesty, made all of us love him not only as a comrade but also as a man with a great heart, and it is always to the heart that all of us owe our best ideals and the strongest inspirations which make us fight for them. Having begun to respect in Marsh a comrade, deeply enamoured with our cause and never tired of making all the effort necessary to support it, I came during these long years to love him more and more, so that for the last few years we began to look upon each other as more than comrades, more than mere friends. I loved him as a brother.

We lose him at a time when he had reached his full development, and when, looking deeper and deeper into the great problems of the day, he grew every year more and more convinced of the beauty and the justice of our ideals.

The work he has done will live, and the collection of *FREEDOM* will show to the younger generation what a man can do when he remains true to his principles all his life, and combines with intellectual capacities the feeling of intimate comradeship with all the many contributors to the paper, without ever trying to dominate them and to submit others to his own personal ideas.

P. KROPOTKIN.

One of the truest and staunchest of comrades is dead. Alfred Marsh, for nearly thirty years a never-ceasing worker in the Anarchist ranks, has gone to his final rest. Though unknown outside a comparatively small circle, or even to a large proportion of the small but wide-spread movement, few, if any, among English Anarchists have worked as hard for the cause, or been as devoted to its principles as he.

That he should have become an Anarchist is not surprising. His father was one of the old school of Radicals and Freethinkers, now all too rare, and a close personal friend of George Jacob Holyoake. It was, after all, only the application of the principles of "Freethought" to social and political affairs, as well as to religious questions, which made him an Anarchist. That the father should rebuke the son for daring to go further along the road he had himself travelled, was only to fulfil the usual function performed by most fathers in the past.

The first time I met Marsh was at the old Phoenix Social Democratic Club in Hatton Wall, Hatton Garden. If I remember rightly, it would be about 1888. At that time I was an enthusiastic young member of the Socialist League; he was still a member of the Social Democratic Federation. Kropotkin had recently arrived from

France, and *FREEDOM* had just been started. The articles, at that time written by Mrs. Wilson, sharp, simple, straight, with their direct appeal to the workers, stirred the minds of many Socialists. They swept on one side all the democratic electioneering dodges put forward as the way to realise Socialism, and laid bare the inherent infamy and tyranny of the modern political State.

Many were the warm discussions that took place in the hall of the club, particularly after the Sunday evening lectures. Marsh, I think, soon became identified with the "Freedom" Group. Anyway, it was at the Phoenix Club we first knew each other, and founded a friendship which lasted till his death. Of all the comrades I have ever known, he was one of the most modest. He never spoke of what he did. Yet how much the movement is indebted to him!

What *FREEDOM* owes to Marsh during the last fifteen years will never be fully known. As I have said, he would never talk about what he did. Neither would he speak in public if he could possibly avoid it. He shrank from publicity, just as some natures seek it. In the same way will never be known the many acts of personal kindness he has done, especially to comrades in distress. Only the memory of them will linger in the hearts of the recipients. If his was a shrinking, it was also a loving, disposition, with a vehement dislike of all forms of tyranny and oppression.

He was just as modest about his musical talents as everything else. It was a pity he had not more confidence, for many with less ability secured popular favour and financial success where he remained obscure. Those who have been fortunate enough to enjoy his playing as a violinist will realise this. Had he enjoyed good health, and lived a few years longer, probably some more of his musical compositions would have been successfully published.

There is little doubt that he hid his physical sufferings even from his friends, as far as possible. Few even of those who knew him best imagined that cancer was eating his life away. But, well or ill, Marsh was always keen where the movement was concerned. It was a part of his life, the largest and most important to him.

As I waited with a few friends at Golders Green, previous to the cremation, my mind ran back over the last thirty years, and the part that Alfred Marsh had played in the struggle for human freedom during that period. Only a few who knew him and loved him were there. It was just as he would have wished. No one spoke. It was unnecessary. We all knew equally well the good work he had done, the generous part he had played. Besides, speaking for myself, I was too overcome with emotion to be able to say what I felt. If to speak of the soul of a man means the sum total of those varying qualities which sway his life's conduct and mould his character, then the soul of our dead comrade was one of the finest and truest I ever met. All who knew him are indeed the poorer as a result of his death, and the Anarchist movement of this country has lost one of its staunchest workers and adherents.

JOHN TURNER.

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

BRISTOL.—On October 12 a splendid meeting was held at the Kingsley Hall. Our comrade George Barrett had promised to deliver the lecture, but unfortunately owing to ill-health he was compelled to give up the attempt. As the lecture had been well advertised, we decided to carry it through, and comrade J. Tochetti from London deserves thanks for filling the breach. The subject was "The Attitude of Revolutionists towards the War."

Tochetti opened by explaining the psychology of the war, pointing out the damnable effects of the Jingo war press, with their faked or one-sided stories of brutality, cowardice, or heroism. He also pointed out what a powerful factor the religious superstition played in inculcating habits of unquestioning obedience and submission to authority, and emphasised the need of secular education, and a strong atheistic propaganda. He practically ignored all the diplomatic jiggery that is supposed to have brought about this war, and pointed out the real causes—trade, power, profits, etc. He said that the only way to prevent these disasters to humanity was by realising the Anarchist Communist ideal.

At the close of his well-reasoned and interesting address, we anticipated that he would be bombarded with antagonistic questions, but to our surprise most of the questioners were practically in agreement with the lecturer. The most interesting question was: What would be the lecturer's attitude in case of invasion by a foreign Power? Tochetti pointed out that even Anarchists were human, and the best of us are little more than savage brutes when blood has been spilled. He would resist, as would the whole population were they armed. There would then be little fear of a German conquest. But that is just what all Governments fear—the arming of the people; they know only too well that that would mean the end of their enslavement of the masses. An armed and freedom-loving people would free themselves alike from English as from foreign rulers, landlords, and monopolists. Remember the massacre of the Communards! A collection was taken of 9s. 10d.

INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL (145 Whitechapel Road, opposite St. Mary's Station, Sundays, 3 p.m.)—In spite of the struggle of many of our comrades to maintain the spirit of internationalism at the present juncture, we, at least, are still holding forth our ideal.

On Sunday, Oct. 18, our young comrades were given a short account of Ferrer's life as an internationalist and educator. Wm. Heaford, not being able to attend owing to illness, wrote: "I am glad to know that the school still thrives, and that the name and example of Ferrer remain as ever the cherished remembrance and encouragement of your school. In these terrible times of carnage and exultant triumphant violence in Belgium and France, it is well to remember Ferrer as the devoted advocate of human solidarity. He would have grieved over the spectacle of a torn and mangled Belgium, and of a ravished and desolated France. No less would he have bemoaned the headlong rush to arms of scientists like Haeckel and of Radicals and Socialists at the behest of the war-lords. The spectacle of to-day throughout Europe is saddening, and for this generation, and probably its immediate successor, disheartening to the highest degree. All the more need, therefore, for the growth of centres of light like your school as a protest against the barbarism which threatens 20th century civilisation."

Jack Panzer spoke to the kids, and they gave him a warm reception. We miss our Kids' Klub, but we hope to realise one shortly.

JIMMY.

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

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

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

All communications, exchanges, &c., to be addressed to

THE MANAGER, 127 Ossulston Street, N.W.

The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

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Money and Postal Orders should be made payable to T. H. Keell.

A SYMPOSIUM ON THE WAR.

[In view of the great difference of opinion on the war, we have decided to print the following four articles (including the Belgian comrade's letter), as best expressing the different points of view.—ED. FREEDOM.]

Ought Anarchists to Take Part in the War?

Ought we who are Anarchists to take part in the war which is now devastating Europe? Or ought we to abstain from doing so?

The question presents itself to our English comrades in a way that it has never done in France, where the German invasion left no doubt of the attitude to take: that of self-defence.

Truly there should have been a better solution, one more logical, more dignified: an appeal to the proletariat to free themselves from oppression, to take possession of the national wealth, to invite the peoples to the Communistic life, to arm all those capable of wielding a weapon, transform each house into a fortress, break up the roads, destroy all on the enemy's road, organise flying columns (*franc-tireurs*) to harass him day and night, cutting off his communications, making a desert round about him.

But for such a course public opinion should have been previously prepared, and we Anarchists more numerous, more resolute. The atmosphere of 1792 was needed, when revolution was in the air.

Under the actual circumstances, to attempt such an insurrection would be worse than madness. Not only could there be no chance of success, but no chance of being understood; on the contrary, it would have been playing into the hands of the invaders.

Now, if we are against the oppression of our masters at home, this is no reason why we should desire to help those who present themselves from without, especially when we know their rule would be a hundred times more irritating, more arbitrary and crushing.

A question of degree?

No! The triumph of German militarism would mean the stifling of free thought for centuries, the impossibility of continuing to wage our war against social iniquities. Human thought is crushed beneath the heel of the Prussian trooper.

As to remaining neutral, mere onlookers, an Englishman has only to put himself in imagination in the place of a French comrade, whose country is invaded. Could he submit to the exactions of a conqueror in cold blood? Could he calmly look on the excesses of triumphant soldiers, who, difficult to support in ordinary times, have become worse than infuriated brutes in a conquered country? To refuse to take part in the defence is to play into the hands of the invader. Respect for our own dignity forbids us to remain neutral.

No doubt the war was willed and prepared for by Germany, but she was not alone responsible. It would be wilfully shutting our eyes to evidence if we refused to believe that German diplomacy has been driven to develop her dream of Pan-Germanisation by the intrigues of the foxy diplomats who have striven to isolate her.

But to establish all the responsibilities would lead us too far,

and may form the subject of another article, should it interest the readers of FREEDOM. What is certain is that, the war let loose, France would speedily have been crushed, and the turn of England would have followed; therefore the British Government may be excused their decision to participate in the war. It was their one means of self-defence and self-preservation.

No doubt, we seem to have gone back on our theories. We have nothing of our own to defend in this land which is called "ours," and which ought in reality to be ours. But if in defending it we defend the property of our masters, we also defend the little liberty we have gained, which we should certainly lose under the conqueror's rule. We defend, above all, the right to continue our struggle towards a more complete freedom in the future.

Unless we push things to a logical absurdity, we must, in trying to decide any question, consider every new factor in the case. Theoretically, in our native land, as things are at present constituted, we have nothing to defend but our skins. But is this really so? We live in society, and we suffer in our liberty and our well-being the repercussion of social changes. Now, if the oppression of our masters at home is insupportable, that of foreign conquerors were a hundredfold worse. And the new factor which has come to complicate our problem is the invasion of France by Germany, which has thrust us into a war that we have been unable to prevent.

In submitting to the senseless growth of armaments for forty years, in permitting our diplomats to carry on their secret intrigues, the English and French peoples have their part in the responsibility for the war, just as the German people have their part of the responsibility, in that they submitted to the oppression of their *junkers*; and we and they pay for it, by being dragged into a war which we condemn, but are forced to suffer, and even to participate in if we do not care to suffer worse things.

This war must be the last, the end of wars. This fever of militarism must be the fall of militarism everywhere. But in order to arrive at this, Prussian militarism must first be destroyed. It must be disarmed, the German hordes must be driven back, the clique of agrarians, vestiges of the Middle Ages, must be humbled to the dust; and when we come to talk of peace, it must be not with them, but with delegates drawn from the German people and chosen by them for the purpose.

It has been too often forgotten, even by revolutionists and internationalists, that the German people consist of oppressed and oppressors. There are not only the masters, who are the instigators of this storm which threatens to submerge Europe; there are also the serfs, who are no more guilty than we ourselves, save for acquiescence in serfdom and ignorance.

We must destroy the caste of their masters, and force our own to treat with humanity those whom we have been obliged to combat in order to get at their oppressors. Peace, when it comes, must be a true and lasting peace—not an armistice, not a new beginning of a piling up of armaments leading up to another war no less frightful than this one. It is possible that the horrors of this war may render impossible another; that the misery in which the nations are plunged may teach them wisdom; but it would be foolish to rely upon the fatality of things. If we will not be taken in by the snares of diplomacy, we must declare clearly our determination that when once we have crushed German militarism, the autonomy of the German people shall be respected, and that no servitude shall be imposed on them, no war tax or indemnity.

Of course, the restitution of those indemnities which they themselves may have levied during the course of the war may be rightly exacted, but these should be paid from the private fortunes of those primarily responsible for the war, the Hohenzollerns, the Krupps, etc., etc.

There should be no annexation of territory. The small nations should be set free to choose what form of government they prefer, and their independence should be assured by their neutralisation.

If we did not know the fear which our Governments entertain for anything approaching the revolutionary idea, we should be surprised that some such campaign, urging conquered nations to free themselves, has not been already undertaken, together with one to enlighten the German people as to the true state of affairs.

In order to claim the right of intervention in settling the conditions of peace when the moment arrives, we must take our part in helping to crush the nearest danger, Prussian militarism, not losing sight meanwhile of anything likely to secure our hopes for the future.

It may appear strange that we, who did not know how to

prevent the war, should occupy ourselves with the discussion of peace. But we must always act as we think right, without speculating as to whether we shall be strong enough to realise our aspirations. For my part, I think that our antimilitarist propaganda has not been useless, and that the air is permeated with our ideas even to-day; and that in this war, despite all, the spirit of the public is other than it has been hitherto in any preceding war.

It has been accepted as something inevitable, the work of a handful of bandits, who must be destroyed without exciting our hatred against the obscure soldiers, in whom we recognise their victims. And this makes us hope that we shall find aid in our new campaign in and from beyond our own ranks.

J. GRAVE.

Anarchists Have Forgotten their Principles.

At the risk of passing as a simpleton, I confess that I would never have believed it possible that Socialists—even Social Democrats—would applaud and voluntarily take part, either on the side of the Germans or on that of the Allies, in a war like the one that is at present devastating Europe. But what is there to say when the same is done by Anarchists—not numerous, it is true, but having amongst them comrades whom we love and respect most?

It is said that the present situation shows the bankruptcy of "our formulas"—i.e., of our principles—and that it will be necessary to revise them.

Generally speaking, every formula must be revised whenever it shows itself insufficient when coming into contact with facts; but it is not the case to-day, when the bankruptcy is not derived from the shortcomings of our formulas, but from the fact that these have been forgotten and betrayed.

Let us return to our principles.

I am not a "pacifist." I fight, as we all do, for the triumph of peace and of fraternity amongst all human beings; but I know that a desire not to fight can only be fulfilled when neither side wants to, and that so long as men will be found who want to violate the liberties of others, it is incumbent on these others to defend themselves if they do not wish to be eternally beaten; and I also know that to attack is often the best, or the only, effective means of defending oneself. Besides, I think that the oppressed are always in a state of legitimate self-defence, and have always the right to attack the oppressors. I admit, therefore, that there are wars that are necessary, holy wars: and these are wars of liberation, such as are generally "civil wars"—i.e., revolutions.

But what has the present war in common with human emancipation, which is our cause?

To-day we hear Socialists speak, just like any bourgeois, of "France," of "Germany," and of other political and national agglomerations—results of historical struggles—as of homogeneous ethnographic units, each having its proper interests, aspirations, and mission, in opposition to the interests, aspirations, and mission of rival units. This may be true relatively, so long as the oppressed, and chiefly the workers, have no self-consciousness, fail to recognise the injustice of their inferior position, and make themselves the docile tools of the oppressors. There is, then, the dominating class only that counts; and this class, owing to its desire to conserve and to enlarge its power, even its prejudices and its own ideals, may find it convenient to excite racial ambitions and hatred, and send its nation, its flock, against "foreign" countries, with a view to releasing them from their present oppressors, and submitting them to its own political and economical domination.

But the mission of those who, like us, wish the end of all oppression and of all exploitation of man by man, is to awaken a consciousness of the antagonism of interests between dominators and dominated, between exploiters and workers, and to develop the class struggle inside each country, and the solidarity among all workers across the frontiers, as against any prejudice and any passion of either race or nationality.

And this we have always done. We have always preached that the workers of all countries are brothers, and that the enemy—the "foreigner"—is the exploiter, whether born near us or in a far-off country, whether speaking the same language or any other. We have always chosen our friends, our companions-in-arms, as well as our enemies, because of the ideas they profess and of the position they occupy in the social struggle, and never for reasons of race or nationality. We have always fought against patriotism, which is a survival of the past, and serves well the interests of the oppressors; and we were

proud of being internationalists, not only in words, but by the deep feelings of our souls.

And now that the most atrocious consequences of capitalist and State domination should indicate, even to the blind, that we were in the right, most of the Socialists and many Anarchists in the belligerent countries associate themselves with the Governments and the bourgeoisie of the respective countries, forgetting Socialism, the class struggle, international fraternity, and the rest.

What a downfall!

It is possible that present events may have shown that national feelings are more alive, while feelings of international brotherhood are less rooted, than we thought; but this should be one more reason for intensifying, not abandoning, our anti-patriotic propaganda. These events also show that in France, for example, the religious sentiment is stronger, and the priests have a greater influence than we imagined. Is this a reason for our conversion to Roman Catholicism?

I understand that circumstances may arise owing to which the help of all is necessary for the general well-being: such as an epidemic, an earthquake, an invasion of barbarians, who kill and destroy all that comes under their hands. In such a case the class struggle, the differences of social standing must be forgotten, and common cause must be made against the common danger; but on the condition that these differences are forgotten on both sides. If any one is in prison during an earthquake, and there is a danger of his being crushed to death, it is our duty to save everybody, even the gaolers—on condition that the gaolers begin by opening the prison doors. But if the gaolers take all precautions for the safe custody of the prisoners during and after the catastrophe, it is then the duty of the prisoners towards themselves as well as towards their comrades in captivity to leave the gaolers to their troubles, and profit by the occasion to save themselves.

If, when foreign soldiers invade the *sacred soil of the Fatherland*, the privileged class were to renounce their privileges, and would act so that the "Fatherland" really became the common property of all the inhabitants, it would then be right that all should fight against the invaders. But if kings wish to remain kings, and the landlords wish to take care of *their* lands and of *their* houses, and the merchants wish to take care of *their* goods, and even sell them at a higher price, then the workers, the Socialists and Anarchists, should leave them to their own devices, while being themselves on the look-out for an opportunity to get rid of the oppressors inside the country, as well as of those coming from outside.

In all circumstances, it is the duty of the Socialists, and especially of the Anarchists, to do everything that can weaken the State and the capitalist class, and to take as the only guide to their conduct the interests of Socialism; or, if they are materially powerless to act efficaciously for their own cause, at least to refuse any voluntary help to the cause of the enemy, and stand aside to save at least their principles—which means to save the future.

♦♦

All I have just said is theory, and perhaps it is accepted, in theory, by most of those who, in practice, do just the reverse. How, then, could it be applied to the present situation? What should we do, what should we wish, in the interests of our cause?

It is said, on this side of the Rhine, that the victory of the Allies would be the end of militarism, the triumph of civilisation, international justice, etc. The same is said on the other side of the frontier about a German victory.

Personally, judging at their true value the "mad dog" of Berlin and the "old hangman" of Vienna, I have no greater confidence in the bloody Tsar, nor in the English diplomatists who oppress India, who betrayed Persia, who crushed the Boer Republics; nor in the French bourgeoisie, who massacred the natives of Morocco; nor in those of Belgium, who have allowed the Congo atrocities and have largely profited by them—and I only recall some of their misdeeds, taken at random, not to mention what all Governments and all capitalist classes do against the workers and the rebels in their own countries.

In my opinion, the victory of Germany would certainly mean the triumph of militarism and of reaction; but the triumph of the Allies would mean a Russo-English (i.e., a knouto-capitalist) domination in Europe and in Asia, conscription and the development of the militarist spirit in England, and a Clerical and perhaps Monarchist reaction in France.

Besides, in my opinion, it is most probable that there will be no definite victory on either side. After a long war, an enormous loss of life and wealth, both sides being exhausted, some kind of

peace will be patched up, leaving all questions open, thus preparing for a new war more murderous than the present.

The only hope is revolution; and as I think that it is from vanquished Germany that in all probability, owing to the present state of things, the revolution would break out, it is for this reason—and for this reason only—that I wish the defeat of Germany.

I may, of course, be mistaken in appreciating the true position. But what seems to me elementary and fundamental for all Socialists (Anarchists, or others) is that it is necessary to keep outside every kind of compromise with the Governments and the governing classes, so as to be able to profit by any opportunity that may present itself, and, in any case, to be able to restart and continue our revolutionary preparations and propaganda.

E. MALATESTA.

The War, Its Causes, and German Responsibility.

The war so long expected and prepared by the machinations of kings, diplomatists, and statesmen, the captains of war industries and the military caste, at last has broken out. Once started, it has grown to unprecedented dimensions, involving nearly all Europe. On the other side, owing to the application of modern scientific discoveries to explosives and the facility of transporting large masses of troops, this war has become such a hideous and sanguinary nightmare that history does not hold a parallel. Never before in two months' time were millions of people killed and ruined, and whole countries devastated and desolated.

As the latest development of this war, even non-European nations are dragged into it. The conflict, started between the three nations of highest civilisation, Germany, France, and England, is now spreading to Asia; and the possibility exists that the Mussulman world will seize the opportunity to liberate itself from the cruel tutelage of the exploiting and oppressing European Powers. But even if Turkey and the Mussulman countries remain outside, the fact remains that during these three months a European population of 320,000,000 have been living through a disastrous crisis.

How could it happen that in our time, after the whole nineteenth century's record of Socialism, Republicanism, Internationalism, and peace agitation, the rulers of Germany, France, and Russia could succeed in plunging their peoples into death and destruction?

The principal cause of the power of those rulers is that democracy generally, but Social Democracy especially, instead of agitating against and fighting the parasitism organised by the modern State, was glorifying the State and enlarging its sphere in all domains of life. The working classes and the nation were assured that amelioration and final salvation from the evils of modern society could come only through the State and its ever-increasing bureaucracy. This doctrine, upheld by the State Socialists and would-be revolutionists, gave the upper classes the welcome opportunity to strengthen their position by creating and occupying more and more military and civil service posts, which ensured them income and power.

Without exaggeration, it may be said that direct capitalist exploitation begins to fade beside the shameless exploitation of the nation by the modern State, which in Europe extorts annually many thousands of millions of pounds from the people. In the European States alone about 15,000,000 persons are living as parasites on the State budgets. Not only are they unproductive, but they hold in their hands the real power and destiny of the nation. To this class belong kings and ministers, diplomatists and generals, the nobility and the military caste. They are indissolubly allied with high finance and industry, especially the manufacture of armaments. To them, war, even if unsuccessful, is advantageous materially as well as socially. That is why in every State, but especially in Germany and Russia, where the nobility is still all-powerful, during the last century the preparations for war and the actual waging of war played such an important role in their existence. The present war, unparalleled for its barbarity, is also to a great extent the outcome of the intrigues and lust for power of a strong nobility and military caste of these two empires.

We all know how two years ago Russian diplomacy and Russian money provoked the Balkan alliance and the war with Turkey. We know how Austria, instigated by Germany, annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, with its purely Serb population, and by this act aroused the always latent enmity of Serbia. The resulting assassination of the Austrian heir was made the immediate cause

of the declaration of war by Germany to Russia, Serbia's protector.

Though Germany declared war against Russia, two million German troops were immediately thrown, not against Russia, but against neutral Belgium, with the view of striking a mortal blow at Republican France, according to a long-cherished and carefully prepared plan.

Russia, despotic and barbarous as its Government is, may yet say that her wars in the nineteenth century against Turkey were inspired by the aim of liberating the Slavonic nations, and helped to create independent Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania, and Greece. Germany, however, not only did not help any small nation to attain its independence, but increased her territory by waging war against her neighbours and annexing whole provinces, always carrying the war into the enemy's country and there ruining the peaceful industrial and agricultural population—in Denmark, 1,600,000 inhabitants; in Bohemia, 6,000,000; in France (1870), 12,000,000; and now 7,500,000 in Belgium, and 8,000,000 in Northern France.

In accordance with this system of military brigandage, Germany in this war threw herself on France, counting on a war indemnity not of £200,000,000, but of £1,000,000,000. All her plans were upset, however, by little Belgium heroically defending its neutrality. Faithful to its barbarous military tradition of terrorising the population, the German army ruined Belgium, burned towns and villages, shot unarmed peasants and workers, resuscitated slavery by carrying off young men to Germany and forcing them to dig trenches in the Eastern war front, and finally took steps towards the annexation of Belgium by appointing governors and introducing the German régime.

This treatment of a small civilised nation by a huge military brute is enough to arouse the indignation and protest of every honest person, without distinction of political or social convictions.

But all the suffering of the Belgian people is but a prologue to the tragedy awaiting France if she does not succeed in her defence. France, with its rich peasantry and its flourishing industries; France, the country of the Great Revolution, the initiator of the revolutionary wave through Europe in 1848, of the Commune of 1871, the mother of Socialism, Anarchism, and Revolutionary Syndicalism, has been an object of envy, fear, and hatred to the rulers, the Junkers, the military, and all other reactionary elements of the German Empire.

Friends of social emancipation and lovers of justice will not hesitate to give their sympathy and support to France and Belgium in their struggle for existence and progress.

W. TCHERKESOFF.

Why Belgian Anarchists Fight.

[Extracts from a letter by FR. VERBELEN, the well-known Belgian Anarchist, to a Dutch comrade, published in the *Vrije Socialist*, October 31.]

I am now in Holland, and can quietly judge all the misery of war better than you, my friend, because I went through it all. You say: "Verbeelen, you are no longer reasoning!" I have the right to answer: You do not know what you are talking about. Theories are all very well; but the reality! You speak of the madness of patriotism and nationalism of the Belgian people. That shows that you do not know the people. I do not think there is a nation that talks less of patriotism than the Belgians. Last year when the King paid a visit to Malines, the people remained perfectly cool.

We might have prevented all our suffering if we had allowed the German troops to pass through Belgium? I told you once before that the Germans could have entered Malines without any opposition. The town is an open town; the civil guard was disarmed, there was no longer a single policeman, and the Belgian soldiers had retired to the forts; there remained only unarmed citizens. Nevertheless, the Germans destroyed the town from a great distance, though it was absolutely of no use to their army. They simply acted from a desire to destroy. Now that Germany recognises the barbarity of its act, it states that the Belgian artillery shelled the beautiful church of St. Rombout!

And you think still that the hungry German wolves would have walked through Belgium as quietly as Catholics in a religious procession, if we had only not resisted? You must be very naive if you believe that.

The Belgian soldier fights because he is full of hatred and revenge against the brutal German hordes which have invaded the country to devastate, burn, massacre, and violate wherever possible.

You speak of secret negotiations between the Belgian Government and France. I do not know diplomatic secrets, but I do know that the workers in the Flemish as well as in the Walloon provinces do not like the German worker here, who is humble and submissive when he feels weak, but overbearing and brutal when he thinks that he has the upper

hand. No other foreign workers were called "mean" but the Germans. As to our Clerical Government, it certainly was more in favour of the German than of the "godless" French Government; in the Clerical schools, even in those that received a subsidy from the Government, they prayed for victory for Germany. Our Clerical Government ordered its guns from Krupp, not from Creusot.

You see, my friend, that there was no question of making common cause with France.

Many people tell us that Germany on its word of honour promised to repay all possible damage. Has not Germany on its word of honour guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium?

By our principles and anti-militarism, we ought to have remained passive when the pillagers attacked our homes, wives, and children? If we had not resisted, we are assured, all would have gone smoothly. What proof have you of this?

But there could not have been a question of allowing the German army to pass through the country; the Government would not have been able to go against the nation's will. The people would not have tolerated any invasion without resisting; and that is the best part of the people. We are not yet slaves. You and all who advised us to let the Germans enter, say, "What does it matter, a little more or less liberty?" A little more liberty is very dear to us; we Belgians would not care to live under a German régime. Ask the people who escaped from the German rule in Brussels. Ask the citizens who were made prisoners by the Germans. A comrade from Louvain, Cor van Haezendonck, who, with his son, fell into the hands of the Germans, whilst his wife remained alone (and we do not yet know what has become of her), writes to us: "If you see the Germans approaching, fly as far as your legs will carry you! What we have suffered is indescribable."

And you think that such barbarity would not have been shown if we had not resisted? It is too silly to talk of. German soldiers and officers drink till they are in a swinish state, whether allowed a free passage through Belgium or not. The result is terrible.

Do you think they would violate less women if there had been no resistance from our side? The animal instincts after such carouses would have dominated in any case. What has happened in that way is frightful. In a place—Wolverthene—all the men were driven away, the women and girls were ordered to stay. Why? Do you think affairs would have been better if we had allowed Germany to walk over us? Of course, that would have caused France to bar the way to the Germans; the Walloons would have taken the side of the French. In any case, we would have had battles on Belgian territory, and just as now the Germans are taking our young men, they would have obliged the Belgian army to take their side. I prefer to see the Belgian soldiers fight the German invaders, who have carried militarism to its highest point, and liberty to its lowest level, whilst in Belgium freedom is comparatively great. Try, my friend, to hold a conference on anti-militarism in Germany, as you have done in Malines, and you will soon feel the difference.

That you remain indifferent at the news from Belgium or Germany is not in your favour. If you had seen the crying women and children, sleeping in sheds and stables, in the open fields and woods, without food, clothes, or money, you could not have remained cool.

Germany has nothing to reproach us for; no Belgian has been on their territory, except as a prisoner. If there have been citizens who have defended themselves against the invaders, they are right, a thousand times right. By what right should a stranger enter your home, and steal and plunder?

You say yet that you do not know what you would do if the Germans came to you; but that in any case you would be ashamed to speak as I do. That you can easily say, sitting peacefully behind your writing-table. But you may rest assured that the reality blows away the most beautiful theories, as a storm the sand in the desert. It is sad, but true. Above all, I hope that my Dutch comrades may be spared the reality and misery of war which the Belgian comrades have suffered.

THE THREE INTERNATIONALS.

Some of the comrades are discussing whether this is a capitalistic or commercial war. In an age of commercialism everything is conducted on commercial lines, with all the paraphernalia of lying, swindling, cheating, and general robbery, down to the smallest details. There cannot be anything to fight about except the right to rob. One must, however, always remember that the object of avarice is power over our fellows, and those that can get power without the trouble of getting money counters, are the keenest misers of all. This war was started and is being worked, like all wars, by the international band of commercial priests who serve the international band of financial profiteers when they must, but themselves directly when they can. We of the third international of human liberty, human rights, and human justice have to fight the combination of the other two internationals, in spite of any traitors in our midst who scurry off during the battle to make sure of their own little bag of booty in rent, usury, or profit.

LOTHROP WASHINGTON.

VOICE OF LABOUR.

MONTHLY (15TH), ONE HALFPENNY.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

UNITED STATES.

Margaret Sanger, of the *Woman Rebel*, has got into trouble with the United States District Court for having begun her campaign of enlightening the working women of America on the prevention of children. This knowledge, which is so urgently needed by the poor, and so ardently desired by all women who have felt the hopeless outlook of bringing up a large family on wages barely enough to keep the husband and wife in a decent condition, is the very thing Governments fear the wage-slaves obtaining, and therefore try to make it impossible by punishing the intrepid pioneer—with sentences amounting to twelve years' imprisonment, for instance, in the United States of America. As far as we know, only in France and Holland Neo-Malthusian information is openly given by doctors and certified persons, and nobody can say that the race there is inferior to that of Germany or Russia with their rabbit-like breeding of children.

Of course, in all countries the upper and middle classes have long practised prevention of childbirth; but it is quite another thing when working women want to know how to escape from the curse of bringing undesired babies into the world to die young or to grow up as wage-slaves and food for the cannons.

Margaret Sanger has begun an important task; that she has plenty of pluck to go through with her work, we see from her resolution to fight alone before the Court; she desires no defence fund, but all the devotion and help of comrades and sympathisers to the cause of emancipation.

NORWAY.

Comrade Albert Jensen, who for some years lived among us in London when his bad health made it impossible just then to go to prison, to which he had been sentenced in his own country, is again in collision with the powers that be. After he returned to Norway, and had satisfied Justice by entering prison for four months, he set to work as the editor of the Syndicalist *Direkte Aktion*, and propagated Anarchist ideas. He has now been arrested for anti-militarist speeches and for praising the Swedish workers who some years ago during a strike killed a strike-breaker. His present "crime" is a serious one in the eyes of the law, and our brave comrade is liable to a sentence of eight years' hard labour.

SWEDEN.

Eighty Social Democratic Deputies have been returned to the Swedish Riksdag. As the Socialists will form a considerable section of the Chamber, it is not at all improbable that they will be invited to enter the Cabinet. If they are of the same tame sort as their German colleagues in the Reichstag, they might have stayed at home; but perhaps their futility in Parliament will help to open the eyes of the people to the necessity of its own direct action in the social and political life of the country.

GERMANY.

The Social Democratic paper, *Vorwärts*, which had been suspended for having dared to point out that the German Army evidently had retreated somewhat, appeared again on October 1. At the head of the paper is an order of the military commander, in which he grants the request of the Deputy Haase to allow *Vorwärts* to reappear. But as the war has shown the unity of the German nation, the question of the class struggle may not be mentioned in the paper. Haase promises to edit the paper on those conditions. Why did he not offer the editorship to the military commander? That would have made it quite safe. It certainly would have been more honourable for the official organ of the "self-conscious" proletariat to have remained suspended than to acquiesce in such a degrading condition.

No Anarchist paper is appearing, and our German comrades, who in peace have already a very hard time, attacked as they are by official Social Democracy and prosecuted by the Government and capitalists, must now be passing through a veritable inferno. If they are in the fighting line, we sincerely hope that they are among the German soldiers who, starving, surrendered to the French, and, in the hearing of a friend, said, with deep satisfaction, "Thank God, for us the war is over!"

FRANCE.

Les Temps Nouveaux was obliged by circumstances and lack of funds to cease publication at the beginning of the war; the same happened to other Anarchist organs. The severe censorship prevents much criticism, but even the patriotic *Guerre Sociale* regularly has a column of pertinent questions addressed to the Government, chiefly dealing with abuses in the Administration. But the hardest attacks on the censorship, lack of information, etc., are made by the old Radical Socialist fighter, Clemenceau, whose paper, *L'Homme Libre* (The Free Man), was suppressed, but who promptly renewed his criticism in *L'Homme Enchaîné* (The Fettered Man). In France, the spirit of independent opinion cannot long be suppressed, even at a time when the nation is straining every nerve to free its soil from invaders. Among the soldiers in the trenches and around the camp fires it is frequently stated that they do not want to attack German territory, but wish to make another war impossible. And with this view they are ready to endure the indescribable sacrifices and suffering of the present war.

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

CORRESPONDENCE.

KROPOTKIN'S LETTER ON THE WAR.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—I wonder if it did not occur to you, when publishing Kropotkin's letter to Professor G. Steffen, that it was necessary to publish an adverse comment as a foot-note to this letter. FREEDOM, to speak in terms of current phraseology, is out to win recruits for the army of the revolution, it is a recruiting sergeant; but a recruiting sergeant for Kitchener's army would be court-martialled if he was caught in the act of distributing anti-war literature to possible recruits. A large number of our comrades are sliding down the declivity of militarism, and we should be careful that we do not in any way increase the number. Of course, all this is assuming that the editors of FREEDOM have not been carried into the militarist camp by Kropotkin's logic.

It would not have taken many words to have pointed out that Kropotkin's conclusions are derived from fallacious assumptions. He assumes that the advanced parties in Germany would aid and abet the German militarist party in suppressing a worker's revolution in any other country; according to Kropotkin, the revolutionists in Germany only fight for a revolution in Germany. He assumes that the military party in Germany are more bloodthirsty and ambitious than the military clique of any other country; he forgets that the British military party advocated, through their press, the settling of the last national strike of miners by means of a "few whiffs of grape-shot"; that they did not do so was because of the fact that they have not complete control of the political machine, as in Germany. The red spots and potential red spots on the map of the world speak volumes for the ambitions of the British fire-eaters.

When one thinks of the verbal castigations Kropotkin has at different times administered to patriots, it requires a strong mental effort to believe that he would praise the Belgian worker for practising patriotism. He speaks of the Belgian workers defending their territory! On what date did they enter into possession? A successful revolution in Belgium, and nothing in Anarchist literature concerning it! Other individuals besides a member of the German Social Democratic Party will say that if civilians fire on an invading army, the invading army will retaliate. The German soldiers are only committing crimes that products of this system are perpetrating every day in times of peace; the Allies will not come out of this carnival of slaughter without a blemish, despite the fact that they are operating in friendly countries.

In the new light we now see history after a perusal of Kropotkin's letter, it is our duty to revise all revolutionary literature, and wherever the apathy of workers towards the ideal of freedom is attributed to the prostitution of the press, of the Churches, of the schools, or of any educative agency, we shall insert as the true cause of this apathy the German military party. Oh! ye comrades who rot in Siberia, if you had known this, you would have been honoured amongst men and tyrants would have praised you. Russian tyranny only possible because of the example of cultured Germany; Rockefeller oppresses his workers because of the example of cultured Germany; to the same cause may be traced the reason for the torturing of Congo natives by the Belgians. Truly, the Russian policy is in no danger of becoming Imperialistic, because it is already so, although one would have expected that dreams of a Russian Federation embracing the world would have had an opposite effect. It is not by propagating the ideals of Anarchy that frontiers will be obliterated; this will only come when the liberty-loving autocrats of Russia rule the peoples of the world.—Yours fraternally,

ROBERT SELKIRK.

Cowdenbeath, Fifc.

Help Wanted for "Freedom."

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