

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

Socialism, Internationalism, Votes for All.

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Price One Penny

DIRECT FROM RUSSIA: The Views of M. KAMENEFF

Interview with M. Kameneff, a member of the Executive Committee of the Soviets, and one of the Russian delegates who took part in the early stages of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations.

At the Russian People's Embassy, with truly Bolshevik lack of ceremony, I was ushered into M. Litvinoff's private office, where I was introduced to M. Kameneff, who is making a short stay in London on his way to Paris as Russian Plenipotentiary.

He affirmed the view always expressed in "THE DREADNOUGHT," that the present situation in Russia is an outcome of the Czarist régime and of the total failure of the Kerensky Government to bring peace, and with it the introduction of necessary reforms and the reconstruction of the national life on a Socialistic basis. "If a plebiscite had been taken," said M. Kameneff, "before the negotiations began at Brest-Litovsk, the verdict would have been to invite the Allies to join, and give them a fortnight, a month, and even longer to consider the proposals, and if there is no response, then a separate peace, for Russia must have peace." M. Lenin was in favour of signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, but M. Trotsky and his followers prevailed, and thus another attempt was made to put to the test the strength of the revolutionary propaganda in Germany. Although at present this attempt appears to have failed, M. Kameneff has great faith in the awakening of the German democracy. To my query, "What about the undertaking to stop all propaganda against the Governments of the Central Empires," came the reply (with a shrug of the

shoulders and a smile), "That, of course, refers to propaganda on the part of the Bolshevik Government, and not propaganda in general." He further expressed his conviction that neither Germany nor the counter-revolutionary machinations of the Allies in the Ukraine, in Finland, and elsewhere will succeed in dislodging the Bolshevik Government by Soviets. It has the support of the majority of the people even in the Ukraine, where the bourgeois Rada, which brought about the separate peace, has to seek the protection of the Germans. As Bolshevism means to many even moderately progressive people in Great Britain robbery, oppression of those who hold different views, and license to Red Guards to commit murder, the following questions and answers which passed between M. Kameneff and myself will dispel many misgivings:—

Q.: "Is it true that the assassins of the two Cadet leaders who were murdered in their beds in hospital have not been called to account?"
A.: "M. Lenin immediately took energetic measures to discover the miscreants, and ten persons are now in custody awaiting their trial in connection with this foul murder."

Q.: "Is it a fact that owing to the confiscation of wealth people who owing to age or other circumstances cannot earn a living are left penniless?"
A.: "Savings not exceeding 10,000 roubles (£1,000 at pre-War exchange) are not confiscated, and a subsistence allowance of 150 roubles (£15) per week is made to those not in receipt of salaries or wages."

Q.: "Were professional people turned out of their posts if they did not approve of the Bolshevik Government?"

A.: "All professional people, including actors and other artists, as well as Government officials, were asked by the Soviet to continue their work under the new régime. Those who refused (many teachers did) naturally were deprived of pensions and the use of houses or flats, which in Russia often constitute part of the salary."

Q.: "Have the owners of factories and workshops been expropriated and harshly treated?"

A.: "The former employers are asked to continue their work of administration under workshop control. They cannot draw on their banking accounts for personal use, but only for the development of the industry, and if the industry is considered unessential the capital can be diverted to some other undertaking under the same management."

Q.: "What about the actual food conditions in Petrograd and the typhus epidemic reported in English papers?"

A.: "I left Petrograd on January 19th (Russian style); bread was scarce and of bad quality; other food is scarce and dear, but in some cases not dearer than in the neutral countries through which I passed. There were cases of typhus, but no epidemic."

In conclusion, M. Kameneff expressed the view that the German Government will not find it profitable to occupy a city of 300,000 inhabitants who are on the verge of starvation.

J. A. BOUVIER.

WORKSHOP NOTES.

We have long desired to devote greater attention to the Rank-and-File Movement in which the hope of labour's emancipation lies. We are fortunate in having secured the assistance of Mr. W. F. Watson of the Rank-and-File Movement, who has agreed to conduct Workshop Notes, which will now become a regular feature of the Paper. The Notes will first appear in our issue of March 9th.

BE SURE TO READ W. F. WATSON'S WORKSHOP NOTES IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!

THE INTER-ALLIED SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

Curiously unjust and at the same time ill-judged was the decision to exclude the Socialist Parties of this country—the I.L.P., B.S.P., and others—from the Inter-Allied Socialist Conference and to allow the Labour Party, which is not a Socialist organisation, to monopolise the representation of this country. Mr. Andrews, who was sent here to represent the Socialists of South Africa, also failed to secure admission to the Conference.

The Inter-Allied Conference but very slightly modified the British Labour Party's War Aims Manifesto, which it practically accepted *en bloc*. The Conference has shown that it is not yet ready to act in the spirit of International Socialism.

THE REAL SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

On Saturday, February 23rd, the B.S.P. held a meeting in Chandos Hall, which Mr. E. C. Fairchild, who presided, said might justly be considered a supplementary session of the Inter-Allied Conference, although the delegates of the organisation which had arranged it had been refused admission to the conference. The meeting was attended by representative Socialists from Russia, France, Italy, Belgium, and Britain.

M. Litvinoff, the Russian Socialist Ambassador, followed Mr. Fairchild, and acclaimed the fact that some of the German soldiers had refused to fight against the Russians. He declared his conviction that militarism can only be overthrown by overthrowing capitalism. He deeply reproached those Socialists, who, when they had dissented from some items of Bolshevik policy, had made common cause with the capitalists against them, who had abandoned the workers and their Soviets, and unfortunately had induced some of the Socialists of other countries to follow suit. For four months the Bolsheviks had had to fight not only the capitalists, but the Socialists, who were striving to hand the power back to the capitalists.

Modigliani, an Italian delegate, addressed the meeting in French, saying:—

The Russian Revolution confirms the statement that when there is a War for justice the bourgeoisie has something more important to defend, namely, the dominion of the capitalists over the workers. Some people applauded the Russian Revolution so long as Millukoff held the reins,

but the Italian Socialists did not applaud when we were told that the Socialists wanted to continue the War to the bitter end. We had doubts of Kerensky when we heard him praised by Imperialists. We sat still when there were "vivats" for Kerensky and Korniloff, and for all those who were against the Bolsheviks. We recognised the equity and upright attitude of Lenin and Trotsky, who did not merely threaten to do so, but actually published the secret treaties. The bourgeois Imperialists do not care how many die or what destruction is caused as long as they can dominate.

The administration which the Bolsheviks have undertaken is no simple matter. We Socialists must not judge them as the bourgeois judge them; we know their difficulties; they are not gods, and, being merely men, they must make some mistakes. But if we examine sympathetically even the strangest things they do; we see they are the only things they could do. Trotsky and his colleagues at Brest-Litovsk, without any cannons behind them, faced all the German Imperialists and militarists. They got no support from the Allies, and yet for two months they kept the War in abeyance. It is our fault if their efforts failed.

Though the proletarian victory could not be completed at the first onslaught, the Russian Revolution has already produced good results. Many proletarian revolutions have given results to all but the proletariat. In the days to come the bourgeoisie will be made to bear the burden of an international proletarian revolution. In 1871, after the Commune if we had been asked its result we must have answered: "Some of our comrades gone to Cayenne and some dead—*voilà tout*." But the Italian movement was born out of the Commune. Great things will be born of the Russian Revolution. One sees that in the very fact that a government of working men has been able to launch the impulse of a world-wide movement which already has overleapt the frontiers.

When we went to Zimmerwald our Government laughed and gave us passports. We Zimmerwaldians represented a great movement of ideas. The Zimmerwald conference, apart from its idealism, perhaps achieved no material results but when the ideas of Zimmerwald made Kerenski demand a peace at any price—Oh, then, Zimmerwald was something to be reckoned with!

The strong peace movement in France and England is a direct outcome of the Russian Revolution. We have just come from a conference which was certainly not revolutionary, where the good people who seemed to think they knew so much better than we, and though they seem still to us so very backward, are enormously more advanced than they were last year. If they are solid for Stockholm it is a repercussion of the Russian Revolution.

M. Merheim of the French Metal Workers' said:—After the speech of Modigliani, I should like very rapidly to try to show you the reasons which have led the French workers to go more slowly in the path of peace. Those who do not live in France as we do, cannot realise the hurried itself into the strife for justice and liberty has seen restrictions we suffer from. The working class which all its liberties taken away.

The *Moniteur* said in an interview with journalists at the beginning of the War, said to them: "From to-day you must be sowers of hate." The entire French press, even the Socialist and Syndicalist newspapers, was affected by the prevailing atmosphere. I was obliged to see my own writings censored not only by the official Censor but also by my comrades.

In order to counteract the lies, which were published everywhere, we reprinted articles from the Labour Leader and other British papers until these newspapers were taken from us.

Some Russian and French comrades, Trotsky, Martov, and others got together to try to counteract the war spirit and decided to arrange an international conference. We went to Zimmerwald to prove that this was not and could not be our war. You are told that the Russian Revolution has had little effect in France. That is because in France we know nothing of it. All news of it is forbidden by the censor.

That is why it was so easy for some of our leaders to go to Russia and stab the Russian Revolution in the back. The Russian Revolution has been represented as an assemblage of criminals, pillaging, destroying all. Whilst it was said that Lenin and Trotsky were sold to the Germans. These things have not only been repeated by outsiders but by our own comrades. We had to fight against the most monstrous lies. These are the reasons why the French workers have been slower than we desired in entering upon the path of peace. But this is old history now. The French majority Socialists have always declared the war to be one of justice and liberty the minority have said that the war is a crime and no affair of ours. The majority are moving towards our point of view, because they feel the pressure of the workers who have fought for higher wages and who because of rising prices still find themselves as poor as ever, and who therefore begin to realise that only peace can improve matters.

When our German comrades struck work demanding peace, and expressing solidarity with the Russian Revolution, the French Government saw to the publication of all news about the German Government's measures of repression, but allowed nothing to appear about the movement of the workers.

Those who hoped for a military victory have lost hope and know that the peoples alone can end the war successfully. If the passports are again refused more vigorous action must be taken. We will make every effort to secure that the French comrades shall force our Government to let us go to the International. We hope that you English will do the same. I believe that all French Metal Workers at least will strike if our Government does not give us passports. We desire to thank our English comrades for the efforts they have already made to secure peace. Though we have not been allowed to publish such peace resolutions as those passed by the engineers on the Clyde, we have made them known in our Trade Union organisations, and we have joined with you in your desire for peace made by the peoples, not the peace which the militarists are preparing against the peoples.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE LABOUR PARTY

On February 26th, the morning of the Conference which was to decide issues of vital importance to the Labour Party, the cold east wind had turned the sky to grey and plucked at the garments of the people who, flinching, hurried past. Was it the cold east wind that dominated the atmosphere of the conference, robbing it of the warm spirit of comradeship, killing enthusiasm? How hideously cold and dull it must have seemed to the Russians coming from the flood-tide of enterprise and hope, fears, dangers, struggles, sacrifice, and actual accomplishment that is sweeping over their land. A haze seemed to fill the hall; the speakers were heard with difficulty. Many amendments were withdrawn; others were but formally moved, and were easily defeated by the mere calling for Ayes and Noes; many fell to the ground through the absence of their movers. The Executive's proposed Constitution passed unmodified, except by amendments accepted by them. Private consultation had broken the back of the opposition, and placed in the position of Ishmaelites all who persisted in upholding convictions at variance with the official policy.

The two biggest issues involved in the Executive's proposals for reorganising the Labour Party are the enrolment and representation of individual members and the status of the national affiliated organisations and local Labour parties.

The first amendment on the agenda stood in the name of the I.L.P. It declared the Executive's proposals to be unsatisfactory, and laid down that, instead of the official scheme to combine government of the Labour Party by local Labour parties and national affiliated organisations, the local Labour parties (with power to enrol individual members added unto them) should form the Labour Party, and the affiliation of national organisations should be abandoned. This resolution was withdrawn without a word of explanation.

The two issues were then discussed on a vaguely worded amendment of the Railway Clerks. This was mainly debated and largely defeated by the representatives of the local Labour Parties, who, as Mr. Herbert Morrison, of the London Labour Party argued, are doing the work though they may not be finding the money. The principle of enrolling individual members was accepted apparently with little consideration, because the leaders of the two dominant factions in the Labour Party desire this innovation. Yet the reason given for supporting the proposal by Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., discloses a policy by the leaders of the Party which demands the earnest consideration of the rank and file. He said that the Party is in a stronger position than it has ever been, that "people are talking of the future of Labour" because they know that "the other people" have brought the world into war and created the awful position of the world to-day, and they believe that only Labour can save the world. These people want to join the Labour Party, "Let us open our ranks to them," he said, "and show them that we do not look on them with suspicion."

Not alone the speech of Mr. Thomas, but numerous other indications prove that it is the official policy to secure, not merely members from amongst the capitalist class, but candidates from that class. It is desired to make common cause with men who have opposed the growth of Socialism and the Labour Party, and who are anxious to come into the Party now that there may be a chance that Labour will form the next Government—nothing succeeds like success! The Labour Members of Parliament and the Party Executive are ready to welcome candidates from other parties in the hope that their adherence may assist the Labour Party into office. But what will be the influence of these men on the policy of the party which is already so grievously subservient to the powers that be? The rank and file have always had too little part in the management of the Labour Party; the determination of the Executive to co-operate with non-Socialist middle-class politicians will push the genuine workers still further into the background.

The Executive accepted amendments by the I.L.P. that the Labour Party should co-operate with the Socialist parties of the British Dominions

and Dependencies and of other countries as well as with the Labour parties as already laid down. The amendments throw into relief the fact that in other countries the workers' parties are frankly called Socialist parties. Unfortunately, there was no suggestion that the British Workers' Party should be called the Socialist Labour Party.

Proposals to lay upon the Party Conference, not upon the Executive, as the Executive desired, the duty of defining the issues of the General Election were poorly supported, and were ridiculed by Mr. Macdonald, who protested that on the eve of an election there would not be time for branches to instruct their delegates, and that an uninstructed conference would be worse than no conference at all. He urged that every delegate would have his particular idea of what was important. Such utterances disclose an innate contempt for the wisdom and judgment of the rank and file. Why is an uninstructed conference less competent to decide than an uninstructed executive? It is imperative that the British Labour movement should create a form of organisation which will give the rank and file power to take part in taking decisive action upon immediate issues, and to give constant advice and instruction to its executives. With the example of the Russian Soviet before us this ought not to be impossible.

Another amendment accepted by the Executive empowered the Parliamentary Labour Party to join the Executive in defining the election issues. If the Parliamentary Labour Party grows as it should, the Executive will shortly be swamped by it entirely, and there is a tendency for Members of Parliament to place vote-catching before principle.

A Bolton amendment "that the National Executive shall not have power to sanction any candidate not endorsed by the Local Labour Party" was not even moved, though in view of the affair of Mr. Roberts and Norwich this was surely important.

The amendment to make the contribution of men and women members the same, namely, 1s. a year, instead of 1s. and 6d. respectively, was not moved, though it is obvious that if a woman is keenly desirous of belonging to the Party she can as well pay 1d. a month as 1s. 6d., and the distinction may presently be used as an excuse for differentiating against the women members.

The official proposal, that the Executive should consist of:

- (a) 11 representatives of affiliated organisations; (b) five representatives of the local Labour parties; (c) four women;

was challenged by the I.L.P., which moved to set up the following alternative:

- (a) Nine representatives of affiliated trade unions; (b) Two representatives of affiliated Socialist organisations; (c) Five representatives of local Labour parties; (d) Four women.

Mr. Scurr, who moved the amendment, said that he as a Socialist did not desire a vote in electing the representatives of the Trade Union organisations, but he did desire the Socialist organisation, of which he was a member to be specially represented. Mr. Glasier, who seemed gravely ill and frail, said that the I.L.P. would not have moved this resolution if it had been decided to abandon the federal basis of the Party constitution, but that to retain the federal basis, and yet to deny special representation to the Socialist bodies, was a breach of the contract on which the Party had been built up and had grown to power. Mr. Snowden, standing beside the two who were obviously leading a forlorn hope, challenged a vote by card. The I.L.P. amendment was defeated by 1,839,000 votes to 345,000.

Though we regret the reactionary temper which is dominating the Labour Party, we do not regret the defeat of this amendment. It seems to us that the day has gone by for the Socialists to remain in little cliques, partially attached to the Trade Union movement. The Socialists may retain their separate organisations for propaganda purposes, but their effort must be to make the Trade Unions into Socialist organisations and to secure that all the representatives of Trade Unions shall be Socialists.

Mr. Tom Richardson, M.P., moved an I.L.P. amendment to abolish what is called block voting. He observed that if minorities had been adequately represented in the peace and war votes at the Manchester Conference, for instance, the result would have had a very different effect on the public mind than it actually had. Mr. Henderson opposed the amendment, which was defeated by 1,600,000 to 757,000. An amendment by the National Union of Clerks to elect the Executive by proportional representation, was also defeated. The Labour Party has not yet realised the need for democratising its own machinery and the leaders fear the power of the rank and file.

The Labour movement as represented at its latest Conference, is painfully lacking in enthusiasm and initiative. The leaders are con-

centrating their thoughts upon the next election, and obviously the programme is that a bid shall be made to establish a Henderson Government, with the aid of middle-class votes, and the support of certain Liberal Members of Parliament, who will be given seats in Mr. Henderson's Cabinet.

We are strongly opposed to this programme. We do not desire a Liberal-Labour or Labour-Liberal Government but a Socialist Government. We are opposed to the politics of Mr. Henderson. He has supported the War, Conscription, and all the anti-popular coercive legislation passed during the War. He advocated the Stockholm Conference as a mere expedient for inducing the Socialists of other countries, and especially of Germany, to support "the British case"—the case of the British Government. Even now, he and his immediate circle refuse all aid, even verbal support to the Socialists of Russia, who are assailed by the forces of capitalism, not only in Germany, but in Russia itself and in the Allied nations. The Inter-Allied Socialist Conference which was dominated by Mr. Henderson and men of his type, absolutely ignored the Russian situation. Yet there is urgent need that the Governments of all Europe should feel the pressure of the workers in their respective countries to prevent the crushing of Socialism in Russia. Whilst Henderson and his friends are thinking of their seats in the next Parliament, the Russian Socialist Government may be betrayed. The drama of the Social Revolution, of which we sing in the "Red Flag" and the "International," is being fought out in Russia, whilst British Labour is slumbering.

But, people say: "If you will not support Henderson and the men who will form his following, whom will you support? If you will not accept a Liberal-Labour Government, what will you accept? There is no prospect of getting anything better."

We reply that we are prepared to remain in what we shall be told is "the wilderness," propagating ideas which we shall be told are "impossible," until such time as those who refuse to be diverted from the attempt, are able to bring to fruition the Socialist ideal.

An article in "The Socialist" by M. Litvinoff, the Russian Socialist Ambassador, describes the policy of Vladimir Ilyitch Ulyanoff, known to the world as Lenin, the Prime Minister of the Russian Socialist Administration. He tells that Lenin, who had been the leader of the Majority party of Russian Socialists, rather than compromise when his colleagues desired to heal the split, preferred to resign his editorship of his paper, the "Iskra," and to see it pass into weaker hands. We all know that in the days of Kerensky's administration Lenin was out in the "wilderness," evading an order for his arrest. But to-day Lenin's policy has created a Socialist Administration for Russia, and in spite of all the trials through which the Russian people are passing, his Bolshevik Government is leading the world to better things, as will presently be made clear even to those who to-day are doubtful.

We urge all Socialists to cast out opportunism, to concentrate their effort on great issues, to place world-embracing, time-surmounting principles before comparatively trivial immediate advantages or disadvantages. Hold aloof from a compromise Administration! Work for Socialism and to build up the solid Socialist-Labour movement by which it can be secured!

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

SENT HOME TO DIE

Dear Editor.—We think the following facts ought to be made public. William Barcolskie, British born, residing at 24, Robert St., North Woolwich whose heart has been affected for years, was accepted into the Army, 5th, September, 1916 (Worcestershire Regt.). After going through course of training, was discharged 10/12/17 in an almost dying condition with a pension of 27/6 for 4 weeks and 5/6 after, he died on 12th Feb., 1918. We think it a scandal that boys (he was only 19½) should be taken into the Army in this condition and broken up and sent home to die, when in the ordinary course he might have lived for years in civil employment. We protest against this form of murder, which has been going on far too long.—Yours, etc., Ada Thompson, Hon. Sec. E. Ham Branch National League of Rights for Soldiers and Sailors and their Wives and Relatives.

CATHOLIC W.S.S.

Copy of Resolution passed on Saturday, the 10th inst., at the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society:—

"That this meeting of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society approves of the continuation of the Society with the intention of working for the further extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as it is, or may be, given to men; to establish political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens."

THE JEWISH SOCIALIST VIEW

The Central Committee of the Jewish Socialist Labour Party, Poalei Zion, in England, declares that whilst regarding Palestine as a Jewish National Home, the Jewish nation which has hostages in all countries alike, does not aim at realising its national aspirations by armed force. "The Jewish people is well aware that it can only prosper and realise its national aims in an atmosphere of mutual benevolence, and peaceful co-operation among peoples."

ST. JOHN'S WOOD

A branch of the B.S.P. is to be formed in St. John's Wood. Intending members are invited to write to Fred A. Edwards, 42, Henry Street, St. John's Wood, N.W.8.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

SINN FEIN versus BOLSHEVIKS

The Sinn Feiners, in seizing land in the name of the Irish Republic, and in refusing to allow the export of pigs and other food urgently required in Ireland, seem to have caught the Bolshevik spirit. If the Sinn Feiners will steer their course in accordance with the Socialist ideal they will achieve great good for the people of Ireland. Even if they do no more than secure Irish independence, they will clear away the great obstacle to the growth of the Socialist movement in Ireland, but if they will make their Republic a Socialist one they will avoid much subsequent pain and conflict.

RATIONS

The official announcement of the rationing scheme warns the public that "no guarantee of the full ration can be given," also that "squares on the food card or coupons on the meat card which cannot be used in the proper week cannot be used after without permission of the Food Controller" and "if the retailer cannot supply the full ration in any week, he may not without permission make it up in the next week." Such statements show that the Government does not even expect that the promised rations will be supplied to everyone. Women, why do you patiently wait in queues; why do you patiently await the starvation of your children? Demand the stoppage of the war and the control of the food supply by the workers; only they can be trusted to deal with rigid equality between rich and poor.

COUNT HERTLING'S SPEECH

Count Hertling has played another card in the game of bluff and greed in which all the belligerent Governments are engaged. His replies to President Wilson make absolutely no difference to the international situation; they are in reality mere arguments for use in Germany.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT

February 19th.—In reply to Mr. Faber (U), Lord Robert Cecil acknowledged that the Government was entirely responsible for the cessation of supplies to Russian Prisoners of War.

General Croft (U.) drew attention to the fact that among the Women Forage Guards much sickness has occurred owing to lack of provision of suitable clothes. Mr. Macpherson tried to gloss over the matter by saying that the women agreed to start work in their own clothes pending the provision of uniforms. But now when they are to be disbanded he says they all have uniforms. What wonderful organising capacity the War Office displays.

RUSSIANS EXEMPT.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of National Service announced that no further recruiting of Russian subjects for the Army was to take place. He could give no information as to the fate of those already called up. We urge that they be allowed to resume their ordinary civil work since Russia is not at War.

TUBERCULOUS MEAT.

Many questions were asked and statements made about tuberculous cattle being sent to Smithfield Market for sale. Mr. Walsh for the Local Government Board explained that when these beasts were slaughtered at Birkenhead, the health inspector was ill and there was no substitute. Yet when a W. S. F. speaker referred to the seizure of this meat she was arrested. Whereas Major Hunt, Mr. Thorne and others are given conciliatory answers by Government representatives who do not deny that such meat was sent to Smithfield.

FORCIBLE FEEDING.

February 20th.—Mr. Snowden (Lab.) drew attention to the case of Emmanuel Ribiero, a conscientious objector who is in the Lord Derby War Hospital and has been forcibly fed for more than twelve months. Mr. Snowden quoted one of the doctors attending him as saying that the case of Emmanuel Ribiero, a conscientious objector would end fatally if this treatment were not stopped. Mr. Macpherson admitted knowing of the case and assured the House that Emmanuel Ribiero was in "good physical health" and that he "smiles and has a cheery face and is in no way melancholy." But we must insist that because this man is prepared to be martyred for his convictions, the Government cannot evade the accusation of inhuman treatment.

LAND FOR THE PEOPLE.

February 21st.—The seizure of land by Sinn Feiners was denounced by Mr. Duke. The reason the offenders had not yet been prosecuted was because the police present at the seizures were insufficient to act. In this fact we have the great secret of success of all risings: numbers win the day.

MORE LIBERTY.

In reply to Mr. Billing (Ind.), Sir G. Cave stated that there was no power under D.O.R.A. to prevent aliens, enemy or otherwise, from addressing public meetings. However, he is considering whether such power should not be taken. Already British subjects who spread the gospel of liberty are persecuted; but then they are British and must be helped by their fellow-countrymen. But what chance have foreigners in a strange land—which they used to regard as the land of liberty—to get justice?

"PROPAGANDA."

When Mr. Bonar Law enumerated the appointments of the propagandists including Lord Northcliffe, Lord Burnham, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. Robert Donald and Mr. C. P. Scott, Mr. Harcourt (L.), asked whether any offer has been made to the Editor of "John Bull"? Mr. Bonar Law: "Not so far as I am aware."

A FAVOUR!

The speaker, in reply to Mr. Ponsonby (L.), stated that women would be admitted to the Central Lobby unaccompanied by Members.

He makes the usual excuses of Capitalist-Imperialism for the renewed attack on Russia, saying that the Germans are in Russia to put down disorder and to protect law-loving populations, more especially in the Ukraine, which have appealed for German aid. It is interesting to note from the "Daily Telegraph" of Feb. 26th, that "the German Press admits all important centres of the so-called Ukraine Republic are in the hands of the Soviets." We trust that Socialism will shortly emerge triumphant both in Russia and the Ukraine.

THE NEW REGISTRATION ACT

The latest National Registration (Amendment) Act, which forces boys of 15 and discharged soldiers to register, has, in our opinion, been passed for two reasons: Firstly, to facilitate the calling up of disabled men to discover whether, after all, it is not possible to make them serve again, and to have the boys in readiness, lest the military age be reduced; secondly, to extend the foundation on which the militarists intend to establish permanent conscription in this country. On the one hand, it is desired to force the boys leaving school into part-time military training till they reach eighteen, and are taken for military service; on the other hand, it is hoped to provide for the recall at will of men who have completed the requisite period of service. The latest Military Service Act is just the preliminary thin end of the wedge.

C. H. NORMAN AND I. P. HUGHES ARRESTED AT DARTMOOR

On Monday, the 18th, Major Terrell, on behalf of the Home Office Committee, visited Dartmoor C. O. Settlement to inquire into the cause and organisation of the one day strike protest in connection with the death of H. W. Firth. The result was an escort for Mr. C. H. Norman and Mr. I. P. Hughes, which took them to Exeter, where it is feared that they may be court-martialled and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Despite the arrest of these two men, the demand for a full public inquiry into Firth's treatment is being urged by the Dartmoor C.O.s.

Resolutions demanding a full public inquiry and pressing for the release of Norman and Hughes should be sent at once to the Home Office Committee, Whitehall, London, and to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and Mr. G. N. Barnes.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

February 19th, 20th, and 21st were devoted to debates on Supply. Mr. Lloyd George deigned to give the House part of the information requested by Mr. Asquith when the new session began. He wept crocodile tears over the "resignation" of Sir W. Robertson, though his explanation showed that the War Cabinet does not know much about the convictions and policy of the leading military men. Referring to the working of the Versailles Council, the Prime Minister said: "There are difficulties due to national feeling, to historical traditions. There are difficulties innate in the very order of things. There are difficulties of suspicion—the suspicion in the mind of one country that somehow the other country may be trying to seek some advantage for itself. All these things stand in the way of every alliance." What must the degree of suspicion be between Powers at War? Mr. Asquith pulled the Prime Minister's speech to pieces in lawyerlike fashion; so much did it resemble the repetition of the forum that one of the Members exclaimed: "Men are dying at the front while this is going on." If only all those who sit in the House could keep that vital fact in mind something might be done towards ending the awful bloodshed! Many members of the Army contributed to the debate; but by far the most important point discussed was the death sentence at the front by Mr. Morrell (L.) and Mr. Outhwaite (L.). Both protested against the execution of men and boys suffering from shell shock. Mr. Macpherson vigorously denied that any such thing ever happened. He finally consented to inquire into the validity of two cases, which included that of an "East End Boy," copies of whose letters to his mother may be obtained from the W.S.F., price 1d.

Mr. Macpherson's statement on the Army Estimates left the House bewildered. As Mr. Tennant (L.) put it, "My brain almost reels with the figures he has given us!"

On February 25th a further debate on the Army Estimates took place. Mr. Hogge (L.) expressed doubt about the Army increases being paid. He also advocated that separation allowances should be paid on Fridays instead of Mondays. Mr. Macpherson, however, would have it that the allowances are paid out on "one day" a week, that day differing in various districts. Mr. Forster thought it did not matter on what day the money was paid out. Of course, it does not when you have a banking account, but for those living from hand to mouth it makes a world of difference!

IMPORTANT TO WOMEN!

Mr. Lees-Smith raised the question of brothels being tolerated in French towns where there are British soldiers. He pointed out that the Americans, in towns where they have control, put these places "out of bounds." Mr. Macpherson at first explained that the Government could not interfere with French customs and usages. But then he went on to say, "human nature being as it is, I am not at all sure that it is such a bad thing to have a certain house where women are registered and kept clean." In view of these noble sentiments it looks as though the military were not so blameless as Mr. Macpherson tries to assure us!

AIR FORCE.

The Under-Secretary of State to the Air Ministry, Major Baird, gave a most interesting and vivid description of the development of the Air Service. It sounded as though the War were in its first year from the many references to "the organisations which we are setting up." Mr. Joynson-Hicks (U.) deplored the number of fatalities amongst pilots in training, saying that it was greater than the number in actual action! Sir W. Cheyne made a very valuable contribution to the discussion by explaining the necessity of strict medical examination, not only before training, but before any flight. He seems quite comfortable in the idea that the War is only beginning! After the various blood-thirsty demands for reprisals, Colonel Sir C. Seely's remark—"I do not like the word 'reprisals,' and I do not like the principle of reprisals. I do not think two wrongs make a right"—was a welcome antidote. Mr. King (L.)

THE LYCEUM CURIOSITIES

The Executive Committee of the Lyceum Club has announced to the press that it has directed that Miss Sheepshanks, the Editor of the "International Suffrage News" shall not under any circumstances be admitted to the Club. This lady has aroused the enmity of the Committee because at a public dinner held in the Lyceum Club on January 28th, she had the temerity to read a letter from Frau Marie Stritt, a Suffrage leader in Germany, greeting the victory of English women and offering most hearty congratulations to the women of Canada and the enfranchised State of America. In the opinion of the Executive "the reading of this letter from an enemy alien was a deliberate insult to British women present at the dinner and is calculated to reflect on the patriotism of the members of the Lyceum Club." We have long known the Lyceum Club to be the home of a most viciously offensive form of snobbery, but we are astonished to learn that any committee exists anywhere, capable of passing and publishing this resolution in which the extremes of ignorance, insulting and impudent inhospitality and self importance are absurdly blended. It would be strange to find a single individual capable of sending such an effusion to the press—but to find a whole committee—indeed that is amazing!

CALLOUS MUDDLING

In spite of all the hosts of reconstruction, demobilisation, Labour, National Service and other Committees, Councils and Ministries, the Government and its various Ministries and Advisory Committees no definite decision appears to have been come to as to what is to happen when war work stops. A proof of this is that recently masses of women munition workers have been dismissed, in one area between 4,000 and 5,000, in another 1,700 and so on, and whilst the Labour Exchanges have been unable to find work for the women the Government has refused to help them financially. The "Times" reports that in one case 400 women were turned out of their hostel when their notice expired.

AS A FOREIGNER SEES US

Sunday, 3 o'clock, seven Polish comrades met in one of the free rooms at 107 Charlotte Street, that is, in the premises of the Communist Club. Whilst we were discussing Polish matters of interest, the police and detectives entered the room, asking what we are doing. We said we are discussing the question of Polish passports for our countrymen. All our papers, bags, etc., were taken—we had to give names and particulars, when we were escorted to Tottenham Court Road Police Station. The street was crowded. When we arrived at the police-station we found a great crowd of chiefly men, also some children—all arrested in the Communist Club. The majority were foreigners. A young English girl of about 18 years was among them—most probably she found herself by chance in the Club and was taken to the police-station. Poor child, she felt displaced and cried. We had to wait for a long time for our turn, when we had to give our names again. We were then examined by a woman in presence of a policeman as to whether we carry any papers of danger for the British Empire. I had only a laundry receipt for 3s. 6d., which was returned to me at once, as not being dangerous. When this procedure was finished we were put into separate cells—many people were taken away to another place as there was not room enough for the arrested crowd. We found ourselves in little cells—four walls and one hard bench (no Bechstein piano). I protested. I wanted to know why I am kept under key. I said I am quite pleased to have the food gratis, but I want liberty in choosing my lodgings. "You are detained under the King's pleasure." I was jolly surprised that the King should keep me for his own pleasure at Tottenham Court Road. Why not at Buckingham Palace, where we would have more comfort, although probably not the same mental spirit?

The next day at 11 o'clock a taxi and a police officer were provided to bring us to Scotland Yard, where we met a crowd which was already tried at Bow Street. We had to answer cross questions; each of us was taken separately—another 1½ hours to wait—until evidence was provided that my liberty will not affect the safety of the British Empire. O sancta simplicitas! For the sake of Section 27 of D.O.R.A. we had to spend a night on a hard bench!

R. H. (A Russian Pole).

protested against the Allies killing "non-combatants, women, and children." Then, Mr. King, we feel you would be better employed in protesting against the unnecessary prolongation of the War.

RUSSIA.

February 25th.—Mr. Bonar Law could give no information about the Russian situation. Apparently the Government thinks there is still a chance of the Bolsheviks being replaced by the old capitalists.

LITVINOFF.

General Croft (U.) tried by his questions to prove that M. Litvinoff was concerned in a bank robbery, and, being an undesirable and "dangerous" character, he ought to be deported. These people stoop to any calumny in order to muzzle the voice of the people.

POISONOUS GAS.

In spite of the outcry against the use of poisonous gas, Mr. Bonar Law uttered the wish that that used by the British was more effective than the gas used by the Germans. Where now do the atrocities come in?

WANTED, AGENTS for the "Workers' Dreadnought." Apply to the Manager, 400 Old Ford Road, London, E.

The Workers' Suffrage Federation appeals for more members and for voluntary helpers for "Dreadnought" and pamphlet selling, clerical work, organisation of propaganda work, and work in the nursery.

GIVE THIS PAPER TO A FRIEND

WHAT'S ON?

W.S.F. FIXTURES

OUT DOOR

FRIDAY, MARCH 1st.

St. Stephen's Road, Bow, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price.

SATURDAY, MARCH 2nd.

Great Push for Peace, Socialism and Votes for All in the St. Pancras District. Meet at 2.45 p.m. at 44 Malden Road (B.S.P. Room), nearest Tube Station, Chalk Farm. Speakers: Miss Price and others.

SUNDAY, MARCH 3rd.

Highbury Corner, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price (joint meeting with the B.S.P.).

Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.45 a.m., Mrs. Walker.

Finbury Park, 3 p.m., Mrs. Davies and others.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8th.

Grundy Street, Poplar, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9th.

Great Push in Hoxton.

INDOOR

MONDAY, MARCH 4th.

Bow Women's Hall, 8 p.m., Social Evening, (Bow Branch).

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6th.

Bow Women's Hall, 8 p.m., Speakers' Class, Instructor: Mr. L. Hogben.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7th.

29b Lincoln's Inn Fields, 7.30 p.m., Mrs. Walker, "Equality of Sacrifice," Edward Fuller: "The Present Outlook."

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Kingsley Hall.—Sunday, March 3rd, 8.15 p.m. Reverend Leyton Richards will speak; Sunday, March 10th, John Scurr.

FEDERATION NOTES

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

Secretaries of Branches are asked to send in their resolutions for the Annual Conference and nominations for the new committee as soon as possible as we wish to send out the preliminary agenda by March 9th.

SPEAKERS' CLASS.

We should like to see more of our members and sympathisers at the speakers' class. Lancelot Hogben is in charge. It is held at 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, E3.

every Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. Fee 3d. per class. During the summer more open-air meetings will be held and beginners can be useful at these as chairmen.

LENDING LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.

We are opening a Lending Library and Reading Room at 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, every Wednesday night at 8 p.m. Books are lent at 1d. per week and Socialist and Labour papers may always be read free. Miss Mary Carr, who is in charge, will be very glad of gifts of books, magazines and papers.

BOW BRANCH.

It has been decided that the Bow Branch shall hold a business and social meeting every Monday evening at 8 p.m. All members are asked to come and bring a friend.

BROMLEY BRANCH.

The Bromley Branch is giving an At Home for members and friends at 55, St. Leonard St., Bromley, Bow, on Thursday, March 7th, at 3 p.m. There will be refreshments and recitations. Miss Pankhurst will be the speaker. We hope all our members will be present.

BRIGHOUSE BRANCH.

The Brighouse Branch has elected a new Secretary—Mrs. F. Hick, 59, Smithy Carr Lane, Brighouse.

MONTHLY MEETING AT OLD FORD.

A public meeting will be held at 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, on Sunday, March 17th, 7 p.m. The date was printed on the tickets as March 10th. The Speakers will be Sylvia Pankhurst, W. Carter, N.U.R., and Mrs. Bouvier in the chair.

MONTHLY SOCIAL AT OLD FORD.

The next Social and Dance at 400, Old Ford Road will be held on Saturday, March 16th, 7 p.m. The tickets (price 8d. including tax) are ready now. Mr. Broadbear will be in charge of the Dance music and Mr. A. A. Watts has promised to act as M.C. There is also an excellent Concert programme.

GREAT PUSH.

The "Great Push" in Hammersmith on Saturday aroused a great deal of interest. A large and sympathetic crowd listened to our four speakers from 3.30 to 6.15 p.m. Many papers were sold and the collection amounted to over 16/-.

A working woman, who had two children with her, gave 2/6, saying, with tears in her eyes, that her husband had been blown to bits in the trenches and that she wanted to save her boys from a similar fate. Another woman gave 2d, all she could afford, saying that she wanted the war stopped. Two new members were enrolled and there is every prospect of a local branch being formed.

London Parks as Welfare Centres

London is stirring to the needs of her children as the response to the Jewel Fund signifies. The mothers of England, potential and otherwise, are realising the claim made by the famous Gracchi mother of old. And as the jewels for England's "jewels" pour in one hopes that the children's needs will be really met. The thought comes, backed by personal experience of the East End child's needs, that the great parks surrounding our city might be used for the proposed welfare centres. It is true that the children now have access to the parks but beyond the provision of sand dumps and swings—a continuous joy as we know—the other requirements of the child visitor are not met. The benches, for instance, are proportioned to the tired limbs of the adult, but there is nothing small enough, and therefore comfortable for the tiny legs of the infants. Often we at Old Ford, who make great use of Victoria Park, find that we have to return with our charges because of toilet requirements that cannot be attended to save at the crèche. There is no proper lavatory accommodation in the park for children. The lavatories are built for grown-ups. And because of this the grounds are often rendered unfit for play. It is always necessary to inspect the space round the big tree trunks—which could provide such admirable opportunities for "ticky touch-wood" and other games—because of misusage on the part of unhappy little creatures whose mothers or older brothers and sisters are unable or unwilling to take the children home. And, after all, there is much to be said for the prematurely old brother or sister in search of play, or the tired mother, who has dragged to the park with the children on the hot days for a little breathing space and rest. If proper accommodation were provided, what a boon both for the mothers, as well as for the children, these green spaces could be. I can see, in my mind's eye, long wooden huts or shelters in every park, providing a complete infant welfare centre. How much better it would be than taking, as we do daily, upwards of forty children, into the "Mother's Arms"—an old public-house known hitherto in the neighbourhood as the "Gunmaker's Arms." Although it is true, in the main, to say that the only decent East End houses are the public-houses, still, these old places have the fusty smell that one associates with property where not too much money is available for repairing purposes. And if we are at the beginning of a great movement—as some of us believe and hope—why not aspire to something better than the old bricks and mortar in which to accommodate our children? These wooden shelters, opening like sanatoria to the sunlight and fresh air, could contain baths, a good supply of hot and cold water, and might provide for the mother's needs, too, with a communal kitchen attached.

Spring will soon be here, what time our Montessori class will be revelling in stray buttercups and daisies—"the little children's dower"—and

the more prolific small white clover in the grass of Victoria Park. But spring and early summer bring a sense of drowsiness to us in the East End, and the children long for sleep. They do now, in consequence of air raids and from other causes, and we give those in our Montessori class nearly two hours' sleep a day. But how we should love to take that sleep in the open air. The shelters could provide the small camp beds, and we could provide our own pillows and coverlets. Last summer our children used to ask to be allowed to stay out indefinitely in the park, but for reasons given previously we could not manage it. One morning I remember well; the children had gathered clover, and were sitting in a circle arranging their treasures when suddenly the smallest one was missed. To the far ends of the enclosure—whose bars serve as an excellent piece of gymnastic apparatus—the blue pinafored one was sought without success. He had disappeared, as though by magic. When things looked almost desperate we came across him—not a stone's throw away—asleep, his head on one hand and the bunch of clover clasped tightly in the other. Overcome by the sun's warmth, he had lain down and was completely hidden, because of his very frailness, by the long grass. In the shelters we could have not only beds, but perambulators for hire at a nominal charge (or free) if necessary, to enable the older children, or parents, to wander round without the discomfort of having the "tinies" dragging at their skirts, or having to be lugged about, the latter proceeding being so injurious to the little growing mother, whose bent form in adolescence bears testimony to its premature burden and responsibility. And apart from the value of a park as a sleeping place and for general purposes, what a help it can be to those of us who are undertaking the early education of the city child. His instinctive feeling for beauty—and none will deny this who knows life in the East End—is met by such an oasis in the desert of his environment. Not only the grass, "every leaf a miracle," and the spider weaving in the sunlight, or the bird on the bough, or flying athwart the sky, but even the worm crawling across the path on mornings dark and damp, can provide, as we have found, our opportunities for the study of Nature in the midst of endless streets of mortar and brick.

If the authorities would provide these huts or shelters and the necessary details described, local people might form committees of management, arranging to run them as they run canteens for the soldiers now. We could undertake to run one in Victoria Park at least from April to October, if not for the whole year round, if the L.C.C. would grant permission for us to erect the necessary premises in the park, and either the authorities or the public would provide the necessary funds. Surely the country could enlist the help of as capable volunteers for this White Cross work as the Red Cross have obtained for theirs.

MURIEL MATTERS.

OUR FUNDS

Donations to be sent to the Hon. Financial Secretary, Miss H. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E3. All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E3.

Gratefully Acknowledged.

GENERAL FUND.—Irene, per Mrs. Drake (20-weekly) £3; Miss Phoebe Rickards, £2 10s.; Mr. J. E. Phillips, 7s. 6d.; Miss L. Isaacs (Peate) 5s.; Mr. Young, 2s. 6d.; Miss H. E. Read, 11d. COLLECTION: Miss Price, 13s. 10d.

FOOD DEMONSTRATION.—F. Threadgold, Esq., 5s.; N.U.R. Kentish Town 2s. 6d.; Consett I.L.P. 2s. 6d.; Mr. Green, 2s.; Mr. Albright, 1s.

"DREADNOUGHT" FUND.—Mrs. Hamilton (card), £1; Mrs. Bathgate (card), £1; Miss Ada Frisby (quarterly) 6s. 6d.; Mrs. Richmond (fortnightly), 2s.; Mrs. A. M. Leigh, 1s.

"DREADNOUGHT" GUARANTEE FUND.—Previously acknowledged (weekly), £2 19s. 6d.

CLINICS AND SOCIAL WORK.—Anon., £25; Mrs. M. M. Weigall, £10; Ben Webster, Esq., £4 4s.; Mrs. G. Lyle Smyth, £3 3s.; Miss Maud Fussell, £2; Mrs. Marion Judson, £1 14s.; Miss O. L. Cobb, £1 1s.; Mrs. Turnbull, £1; Per Mr. C. Howes, £1; Mrs. Richmond, (fortnightly), 10s.; Nurse Hebbes (weekly), 10s.; Anon., 10s.; Miss Whales, 7s. 1d.; Mr. Stiebel, 1s. COLLECTIONS.—L.S.A. Tool-room, £1 18s. 6d.; Misses E. Lagsding and J. Watts (Green's Yard), 10s. 11d.; Misses Vine and Gilbertson, 8s. 6d.; Miss K. Lagsding and Mrs. Bertram (Cubit Town), 6s. 2 1/2d.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

FAMILY LIMITATION DOCTRINE. Post free, 14d. —Malthusian League, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster.

WOMEN WORKERS should spend their holidays at "Sea View," Victoria Road, Brighton.—Hostess, Miss Turner.

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Dear Friends of Humanity.—Before the storm bursts let us endeavour to place the children and all those who are helpless in comparative safety by securing SEVEN SHILLINGS A WEEK each for them from the State, that we may be free to work for other reforms. At present, whilst they are exposed to cold, poverty and hunger, we can think of nothing else. 7s. a week would ENABLE FAMILIES TO MOVE AT ONCE INTO BETTER HOUSES, and to obtain better milk and food. This would stimulate local trade and reduce expenses of WORK-HOUSES, HOSPITALS, PRISONS and LUNATIC ASYLUMS, and do away with all poor rates to such an extent as to be A GREAT SAVING to the taxpayers, and would enable sensible girls to marry where they would otherwise not dare to do so, and to bring up healthy happy children to become stalwart citizens and parents in their turn, besides relieving untold pain and suffering, and being an estimable benefit to the State.

The fact of a married man becoming automatically all demand this from our different Governments now, before it may be too late.

POORER at the birth of each child constitutes a cruel wrong to all children, and until each child has 7s. a week in its own individual right, as an infant citizen, suffering, war, disease, and poverty can never be abolished. Let us

S. MACKENZIE KENNEDY.

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