

THE CANADIAN FORWARD

To Our Contributors—

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The saddest sight in all the world is not a grave of the dead, grievous as that might be, but it is a grave of the living—humanity sepulchred while yet alive.—Frances E. Willard.



THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRACY.

The elements that make for Human progress are not embodied in present day legislative enactment, these are merely monetary forms or expressions of legalized robbery and repression. Justice is not to be found in the letter of the law; it is the spirit that giveth life.

Regenerated Russia is a typical example of the motive forces at work for the overthrow of Class privilege. The eternal spirit of revolt against arbitrary restrictions, the spirit that dethroned Czars may yet spike every gun upon every European battlefield. The time has come for the workers of all countries to realize that liberty cannot be given from above,—but must be taken from below.

What a travesty of the virgin principle of democracy is brought to light by the trial of men like Liecknecht and Brockway, whose only crime was in daring to speak the truth as they saw it, and refusing to become traitors to their conscience and their class.

Behold those who sit in judgment who are protected by special privileges. Lawyers and Ministers do not have to fight for their Country, men who do not have to bear arms sitting in judgment upon those who have no true economic interest at stake.

There are two grades in present-day society who have no right to say you shall bear arms, viz.: The person who is protected from so doing by special privileges of law, and the person who is not in Khaki en route to the firing line.

Men will agree to participate in war on two conditions.

Firstly, to gratify some material incentive, or, secondly, to satisfy a moral scruple.

In the absence of these two principles no person will agree to engage in War.

A NOBLE STAND.

We hand the palm to our comrades in the States for their clear class-conscious declaration, who, notwithstanding the penalty they may incur by so doing, "Resolve to continuous, active opposition to the War by all means in

their power." This attitude is worthy of the devotion it will call forth. A man who will not live or die for a great humanizing principle has not reached the stage of manhood. We do not mean to infer that all Soldiers are brutes, a man must be judged by his motives. It is the mal-education, and the hypocritical pretensions of a Ruling class dominated by an overwhelming desire for place and dominion that has produced the deluge of blood in Europe.

We are entirely in harmony with George Brandes when he said: "Great thinkers, good men, noble thoughts, high ideals, intellectual achievements, patient scientists and the undimmed truth—these are the forces that make for true progress; these are the forces that are worth more in a country than all the forces of race hatred, of militarism, of aggressive strength, and organized brutality

ETERNAL VIGILANCE IS THE PRICE.

Let no one be carried away with the notion that the battle for democracy is won and no further efforts are necessary upon the part of those who would be free, just because the Russian autocracy has been overthrown. That there are powerful interests in that country, as well as in all others, that will leave no stone unturned to reinstate the old regime and curb the aspirations of the democratically inclined, goes without saying. As "eternal vigilance" is said to be the "price of liberty," so it may be said with equal truth that it is also the price of everything else that makes for human uplift and a higher civilization. The reactionary elements in human society, those forces that predicate their pomp and power upon the enslavement and robbery of the wealth producers of all lands, loathe democracy as a cat loathes soap, and in spite of their lip-loyalty to her cause, they will as readily betray it as Judas betrayed the Master to whom he had professed devotion. Even in the most advanced countries of the earth, where governments are based upon the consent of the governed and subject to rejection and removal at the will of an enfranchised people, every trick and device that can be conjured forth from the prolifically

evil brain of high-class cunning and well-paid roguery, is utilized for the purpose of hamstringing democracy and thwarting its purpose. And if those who worship at her shrine are remiss in their efforts to maintain that democracy and extend the scope of its activities and its power, the little that has already been gained will be lost, and the world will relapse into a repetition of the dark ages of hopeless slavery out of which humanity has so laboriously and painfully emerged.—B. C. Federationist.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

N.B.—This is No. 12 of a series of passages culled from the works of the world's greatest sociological writers. In their final form these articles will make a worth-while anthology of Social-Democracy.

Among certain races and in certain countries we have seen the most stubborn and deep-rooted conventions of honor entirely overcome. Few institutions, for instance, were as soundly entrenched in the world as the duel. It was founded on some of the finest instincts of humanity; on hatred to injustice, on honor, on aristocratic traditions and personal pride. In the 18th century the duel still flourished among Anglo-Saxon nations, as well as among the Latins, Germans and Slavs. It is still ineradicable in Germany, and France, but in Great Britain and in the United States it is as dead as it is in the Scandinavian countries. And if dueling could die a natural death, why can't we predict the death of war? But just as the duel could not be eradicated by decapitating the duelists, as Riche-lieu attempted to do, so militarism cannot be uprooted by munitions and conscription.

What a multitude of prejudices had to be removed before the duel disappeared! Such scorn and derision as met the man who refused to challenge one who had insulted him! What a school for courage, honor and personal dignity the duel was said to be—for thousands of years! And yet, quietly, unobtrusively, it has been eliminated and forgotten by the most civilized nations in the world.

According to its partisans, its disappearance should have weakened the moral fibre of men, generated cowardice and a plebeian mode of thought. Yet no man in his senses considers the Americans or the English less manly than the French or Germans.

In a few small and slightly civilized communities the disappearance of the duel may, for instance, have increased the impudence of the press. Newspapers are now, perhaps, more disrespectful when an offence may call forth a challenge. In larger communities, however—in England and America, for instance—men have not lost their honor since the duel disappeared, nor has life, on the whole, become less thrilling or noble. Nor has decadence increased; nor idealism diminished. The disappearance of war would not be more fatal to the maintenance of the highest ideals of life than was the elimination of the duel.

I wish that men would realize that true progress comes from other sources. Great thinkers, good men, noble thoughts, high ideals, intellectual achievements, patient scientists and the undimmed truth—these are the forces that make for true progress! These are the forces which are worth more in a country than all forces of race hatred, of militarism, of aggressive strength, of organized brutality.—George Brandes, in the Conservator.

Butter is eight shilling a pound, apples 2 shillings each, and boots ten pounds a pair in Petrograd. In Italy kitchen coal costs sixteen pounds per ton.

MAJORITY REPORT

S. P. of A. CONVENTION

In harmony with these principles, the Socialist Party emphatically rejects the proposal that in time of war the workers should suspend their struggle for better conditions. On the contrary, the acute situation created by war calls for an even more vigorous prosecution of the class struggle, and we recommend to the workers and pledge ourselves to the following course of action:

1. Continuous, active, and public opposition to the war, through demonstrations, mass petitions, and all other means within our power.

2. Unyielding opposition to all proposed legislations for military or industrial conscription. Should such conscription be forced upon the people, we pledge ourselves to continuous efforts for the repeal of such laws and to the support of all mass movements in opposition to conscription. We pledge ourselves to fight with all our strength against any attempt to raise money for the payment of war expenses by taxing the necessities of life or issuing bonds, which will put the burden upon future generations. We demand that the capitalist class, which is responsible for the war, pay its cost. Let those who kindle the fire furnish the fuel.

3. Vigorous resistance to all reactionary measures, such as censorship of press and mails, restriction of the rights of free speech, assemblage, and organization, or compulsory arbitration and limitation of the right of strike.

4. Consistent propaganda against military training and militaristic teaching in the public schools.

5. Extension of the campaign of education among the workers to organize them into strong, class-conscious, and closely unified political and industrial organizations, to enable them by concerted and harmonious mass action to shorten this war and to establish lasting peace.

6. Widespread educational propaganda to enlighten the masses as to the true relation between capitalism and war, and to rouse and organize them for action, not only against present war evils, but for the prevention of future wars and for the destruction of the causes of war.

7. To protect the masses of the American people from the pressing danger of starvation which the war in Europe has brought upon them, and which the entry of the United States has already accentuated, we demand:

(a) The restriction of food exports so long as the present shortage continues, fixing of maximum prices, and whatever measures may be necessary to prevent the food speculators from holding back the supplies now in their hands;

(b) The socialization and democratic management of the great industries concerned with the production, transportation, storage, and the marketing of food and other necessities of life;

(c) The socialization and democratic management of all land and other natural resources which is now held out of use for monopolistic or speculative profit.

These measures are presented as means of protecting the workers against the vil results of the present war. The danger of recurrence of war will exist as long as the capitalist system of industry remains in existence. The end of wars will come with the establishment of socialized industry and industrial democracy the world over. The Socialist Party calls upon all the workers to join it in its struggle to reach this goal, and thus bring into the world a new society in which peace, fraternity, and human brotherhood will be the dominant ideals.—American Socialist.

The homage paid to a man because he has become a millionaire, is an act of worship at the shrine of modern Capitalism!